

SANPEI SHIRATO

AKAME

THE RED EYES

赤目

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SANPEI SHIRATO

赤

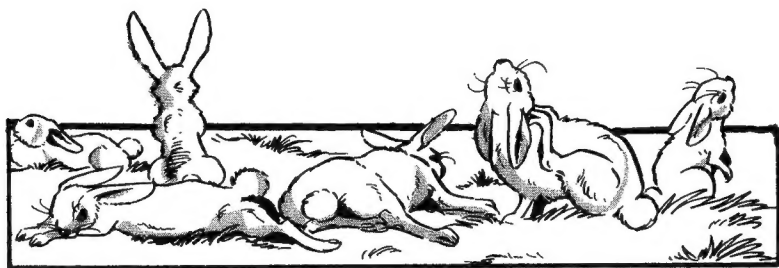
AKAME

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SANPEI SHIRATO

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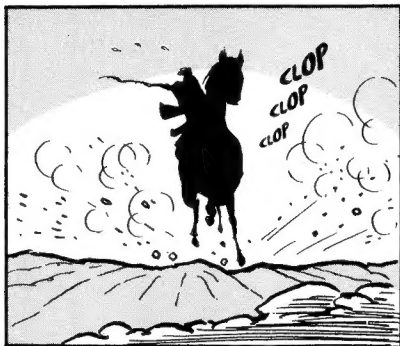


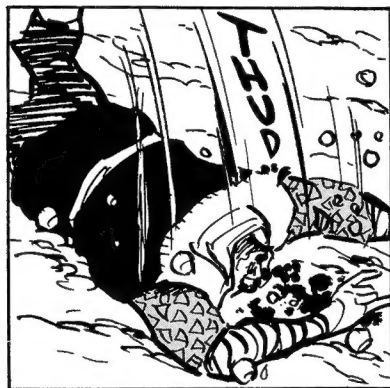
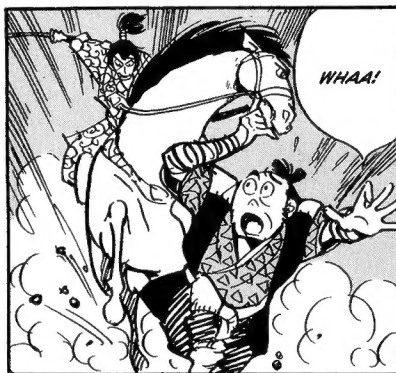
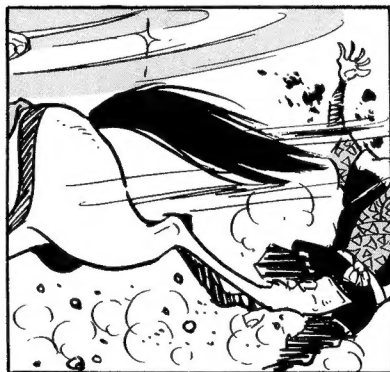
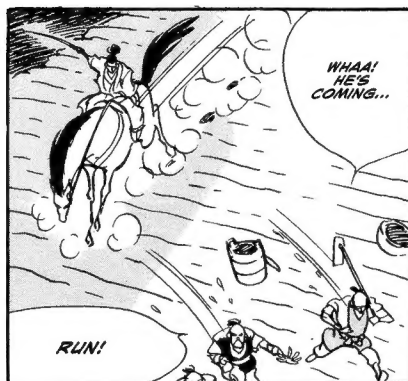


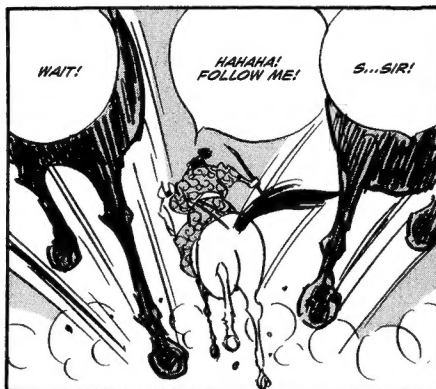
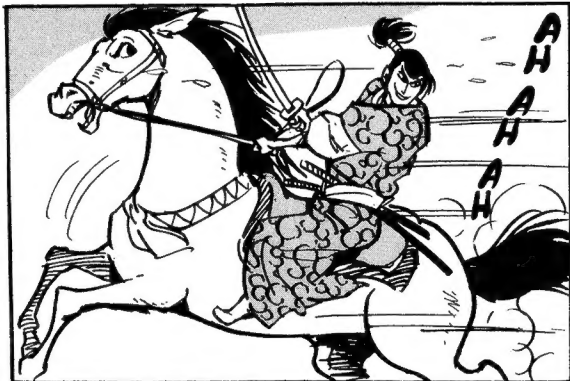
赤
AKAME
目

PART ONE

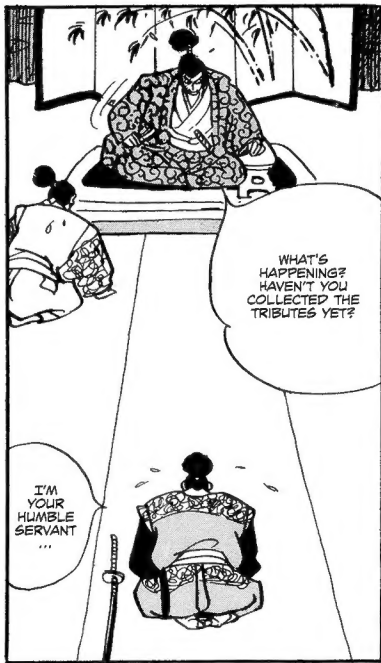


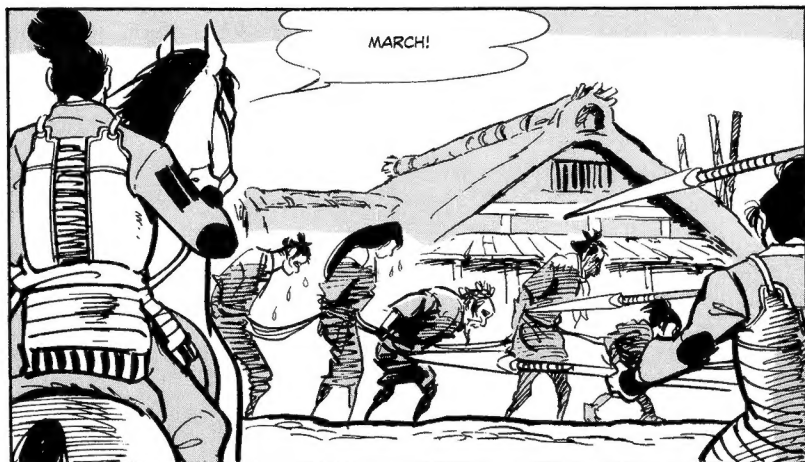
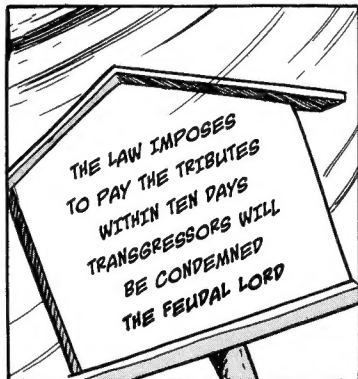




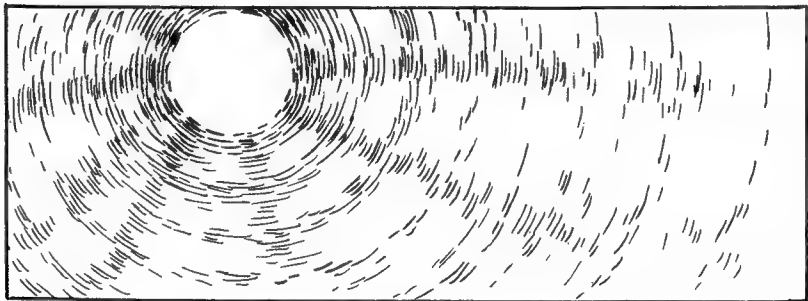


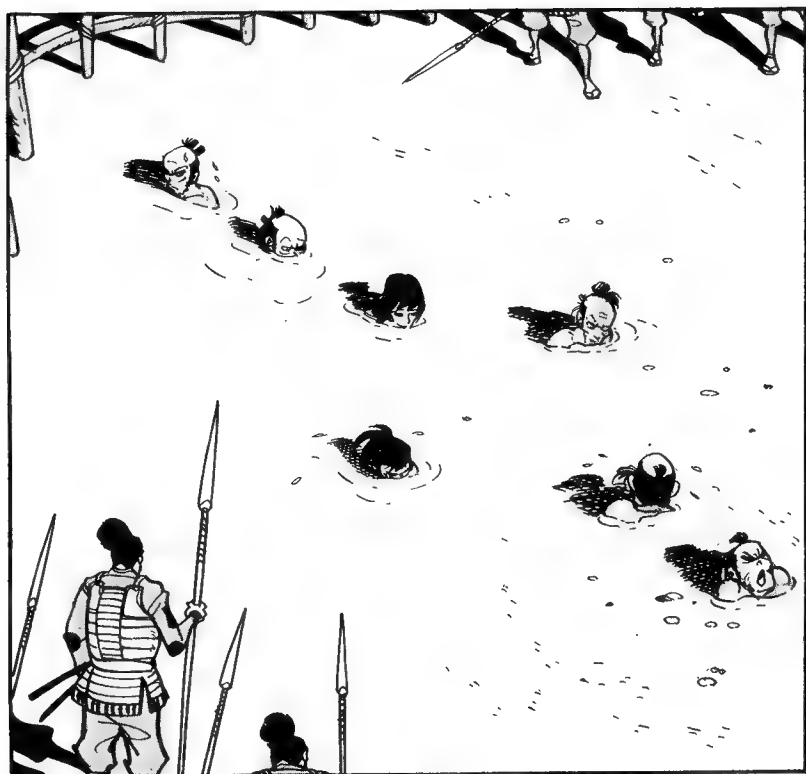




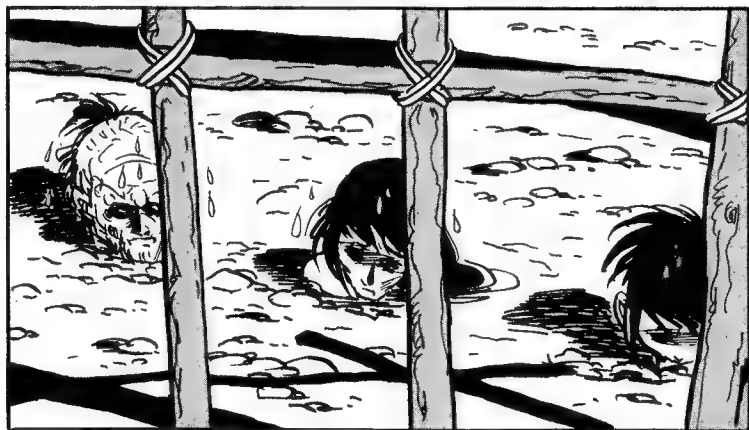




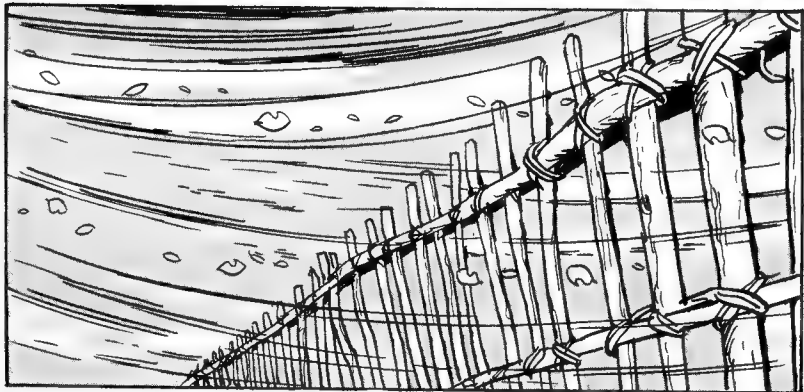
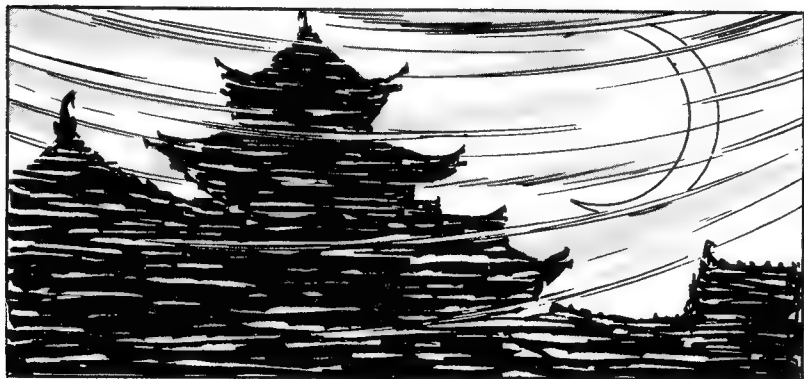
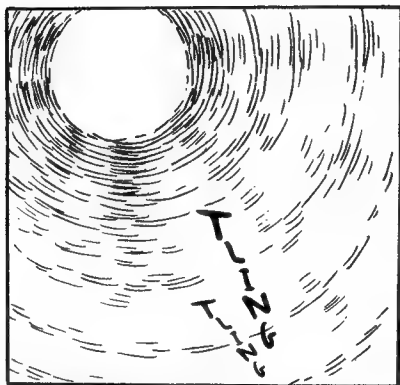


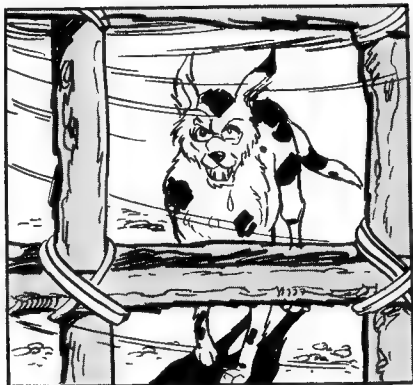




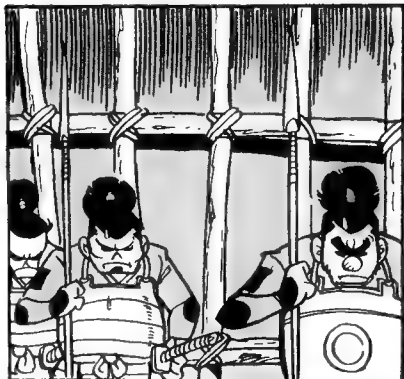


The third day...

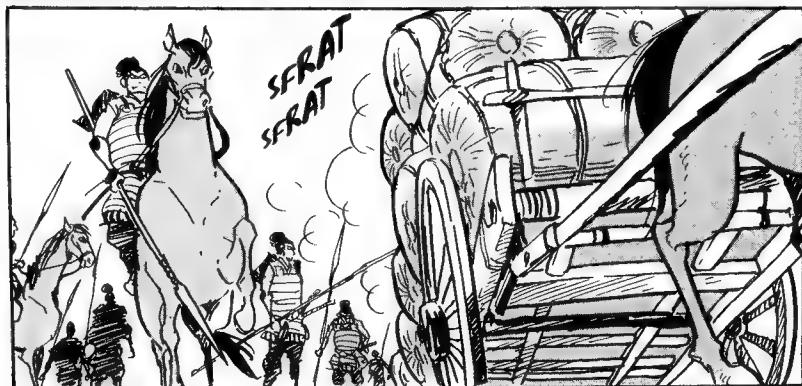


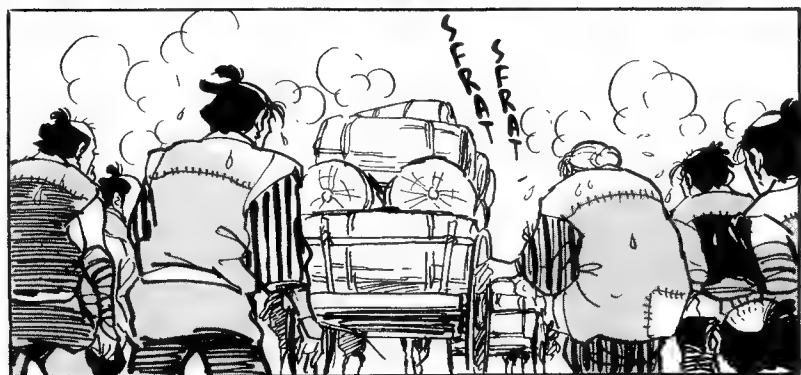
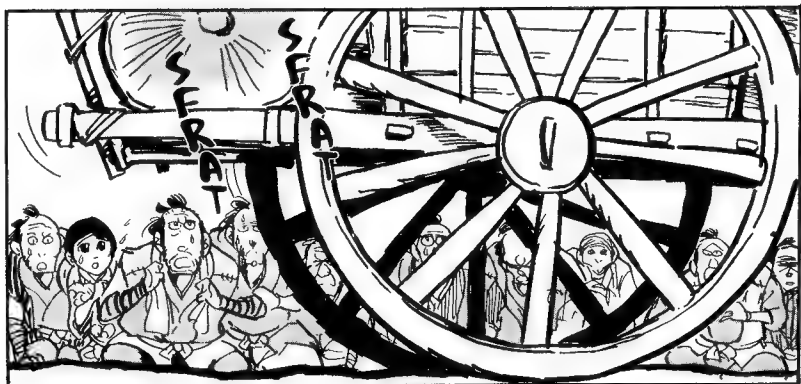






The guards
knew that stray
dogs would come
to feast on the
prisoners...
yet they turned
a blind eye...



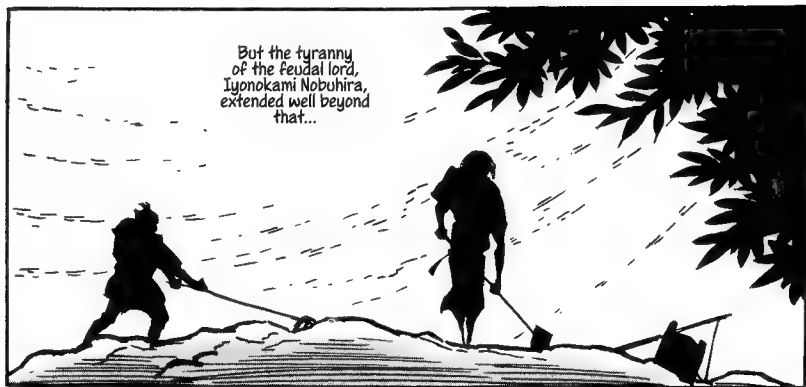


YES, YOUR LORDSHIP!

SHUZEN,
NEVER FORGET...
THIS IS HOW
FARMERS SHOULD
BE DEALT WITH.



AHAHAHA!
DID YOU SEE
THEM SCURRY?



But the tyranny
of the feudal lord,
Iyonokami Nobuhira,
extended well beyond
that...



DARLING,
DON'T
OVERDO
IT!

THE
BABY JUST
MOVED!

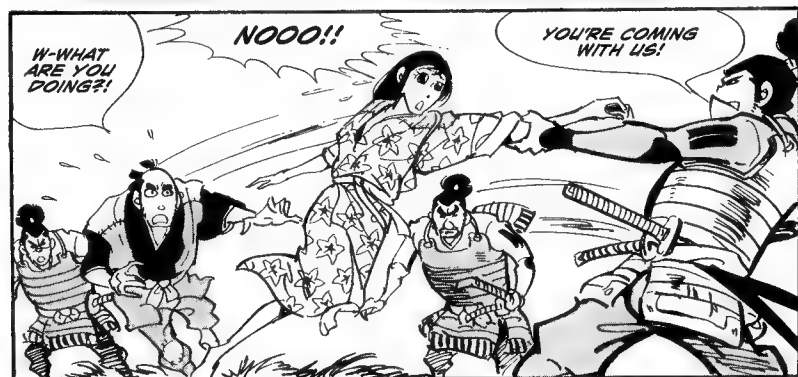


WHAT'S
WRONG?

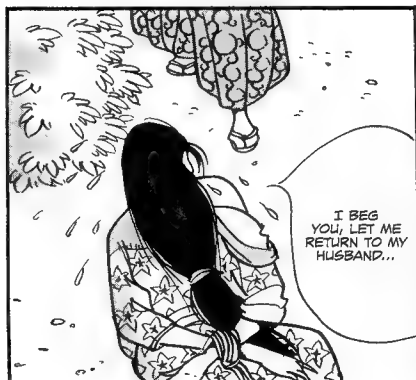


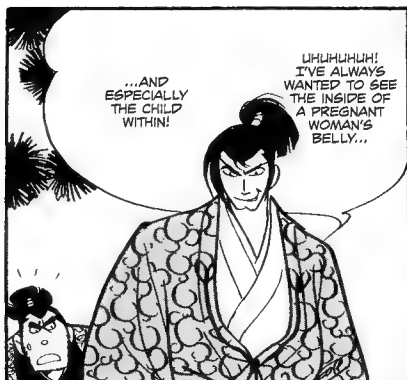
I WONDER
IF IT'LL BE A
BOY OR...

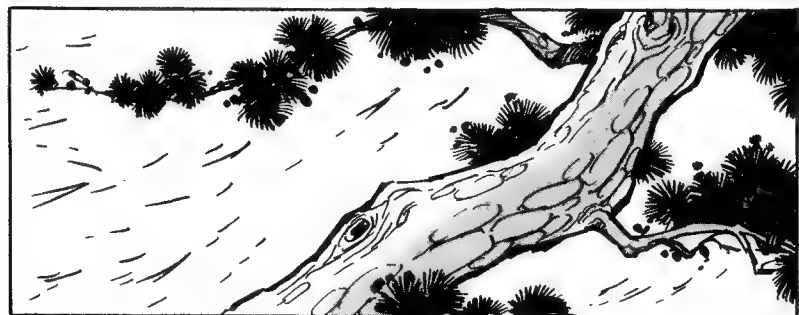
IT WON'T
TAKE MUCH
LONGER,
RIGHT?



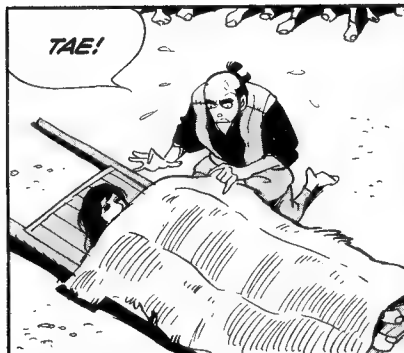


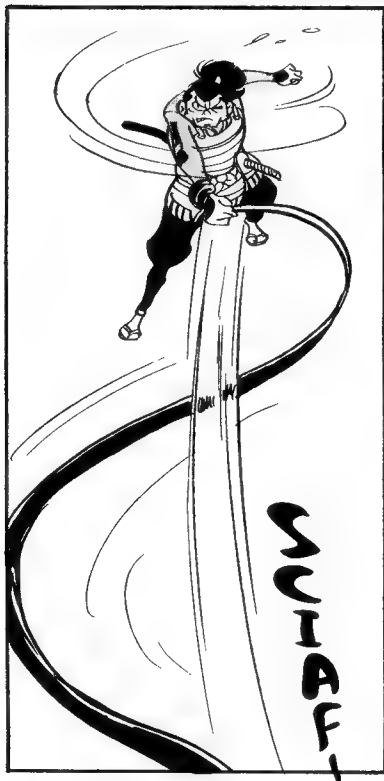


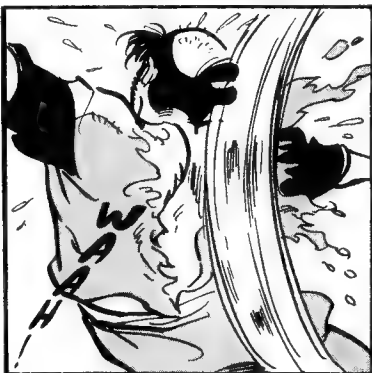


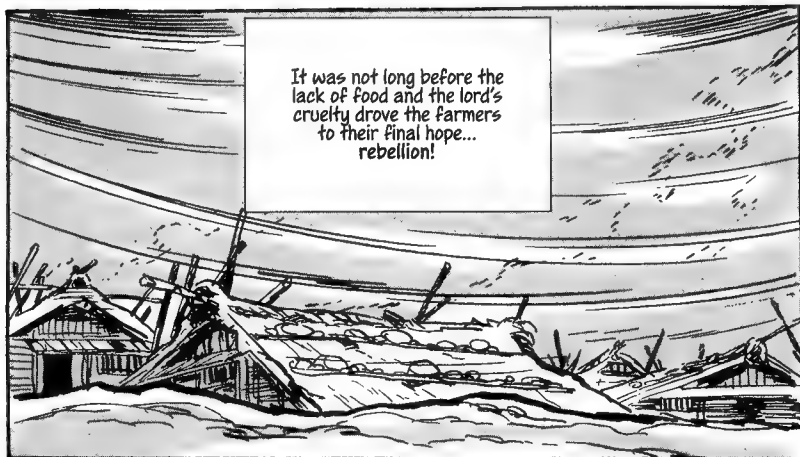


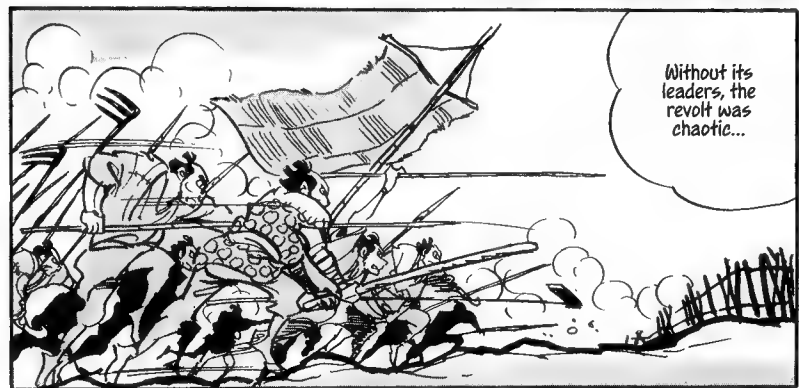
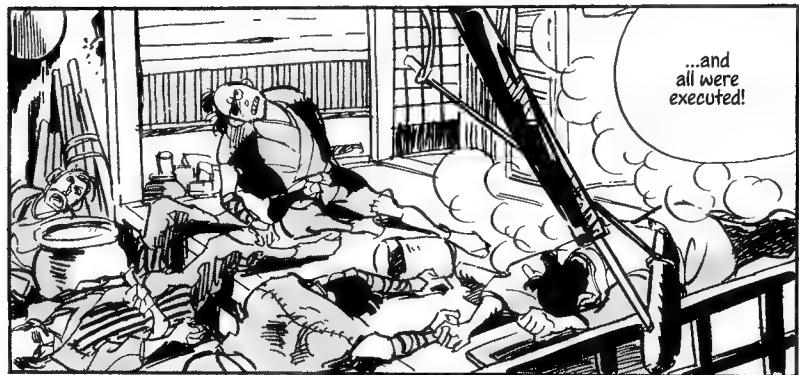










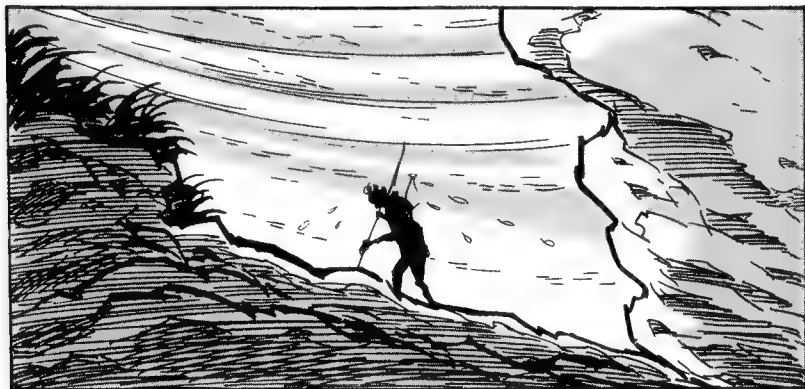


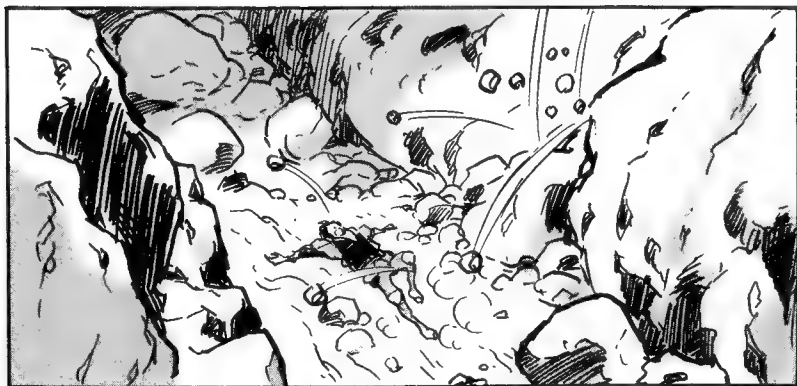
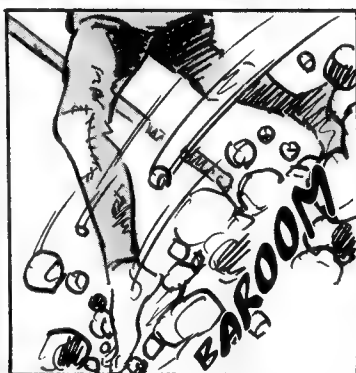
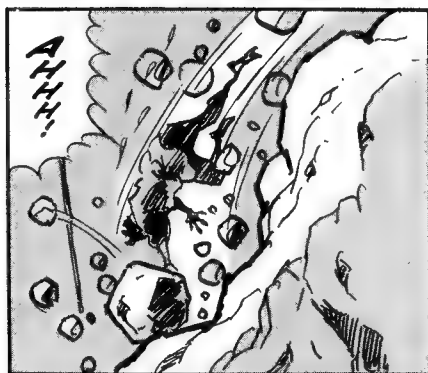


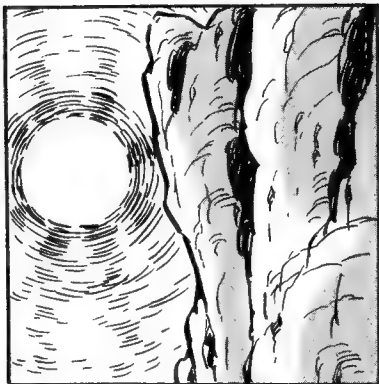
...and
ended in
brutal
tragedy.



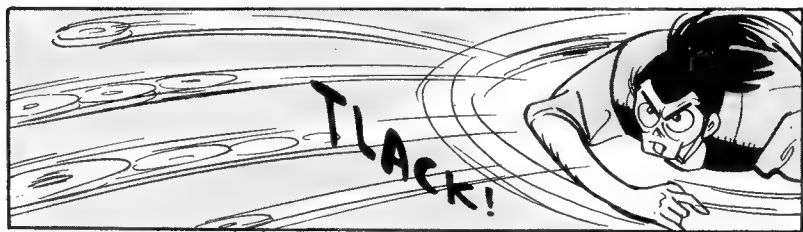
But even
afterwards,
all those
who dared
stand up
against the
Lord were
treated
without
mercy.

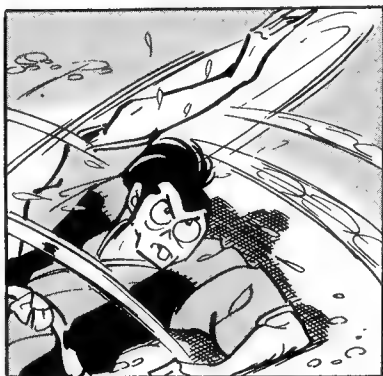
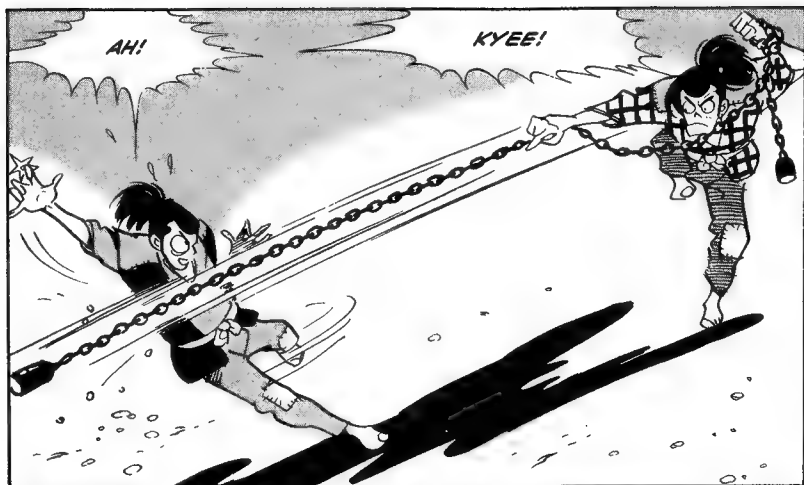


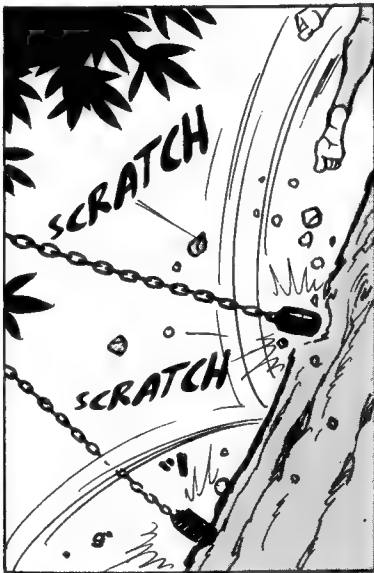
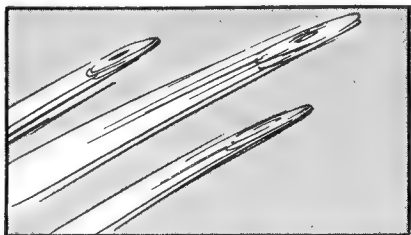
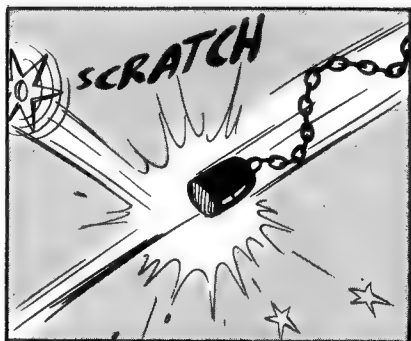


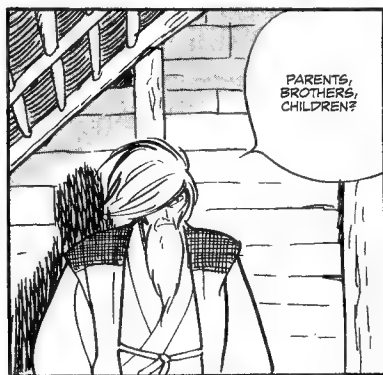




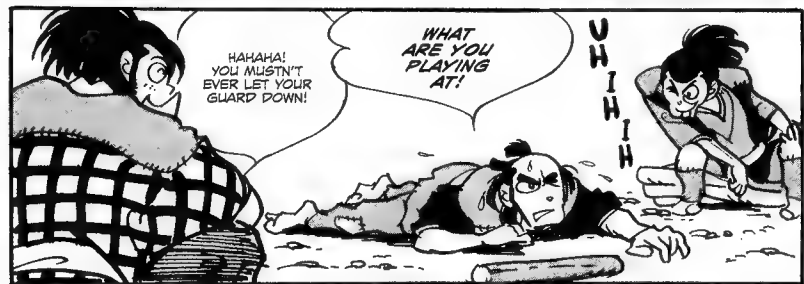
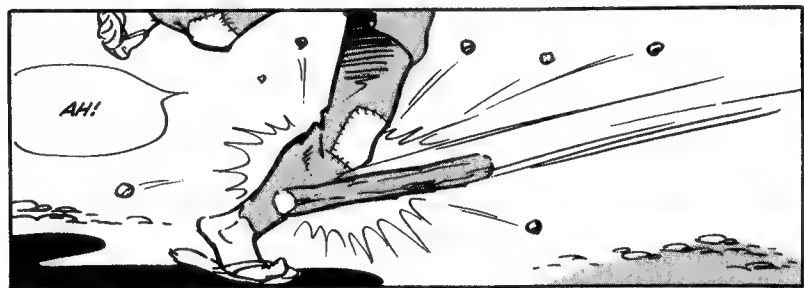
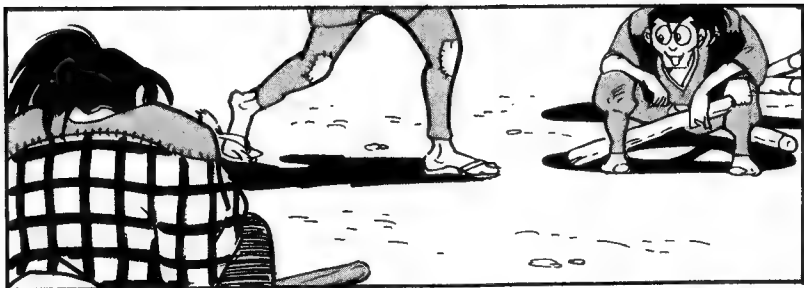


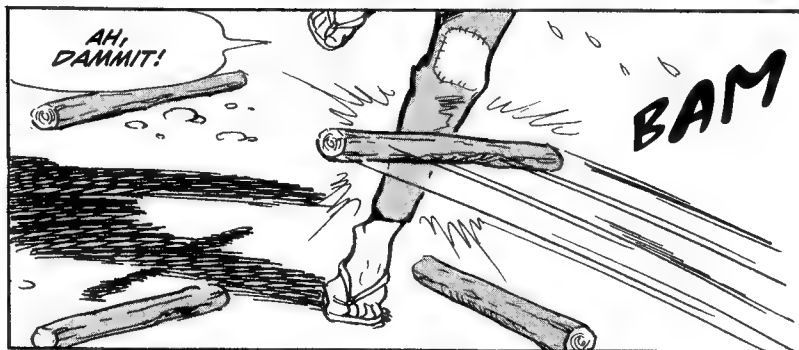
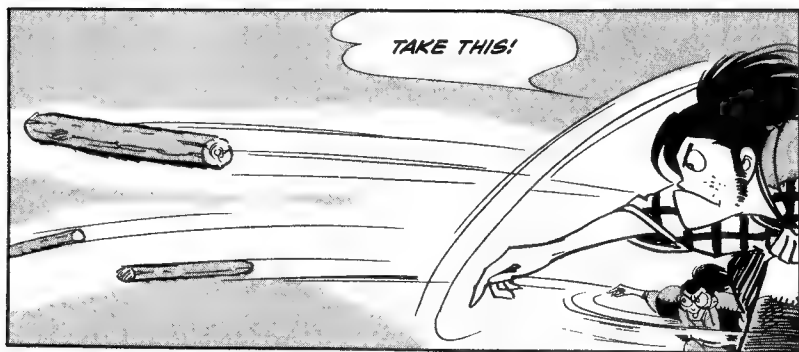


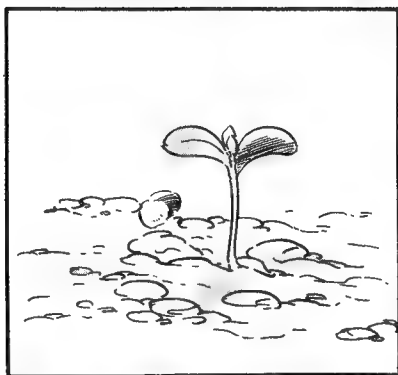








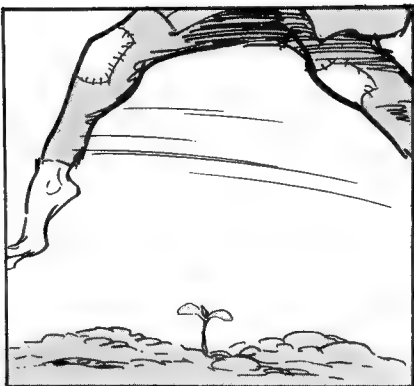




That
moment
was the
beginning
of that
man's
training.



But the hemp
grew quickly...



In the blink
of an eye, the
plant stood
one, then two
shaku* tall.



TL Note: a shaku equals 30,3 cm/1 foot.



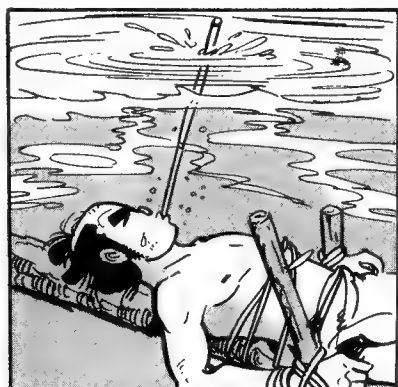
His leaping
ability had to
grow alongside
the hemp...

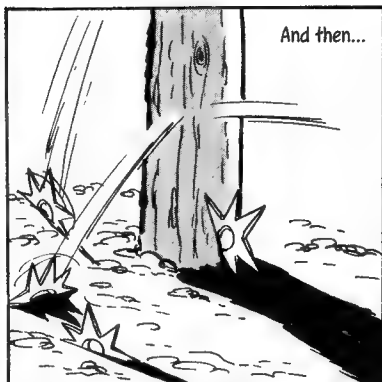
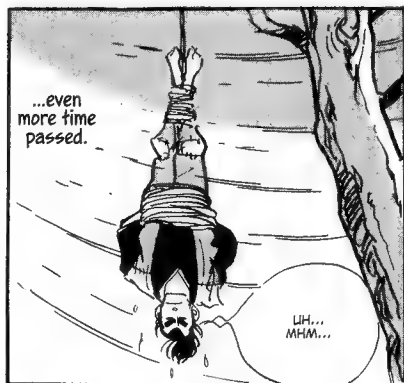


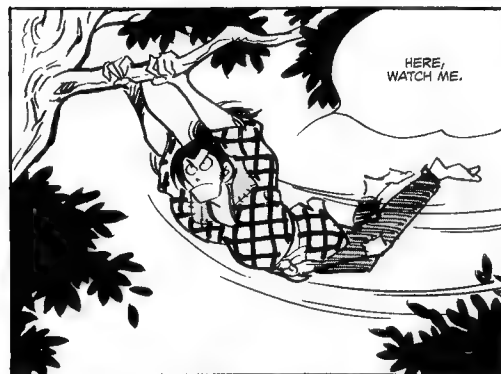
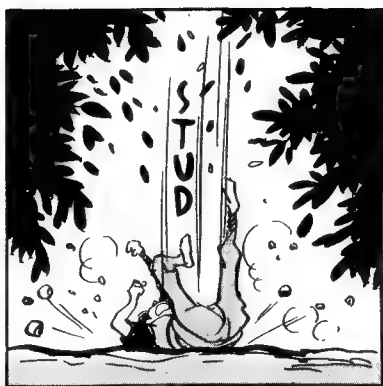
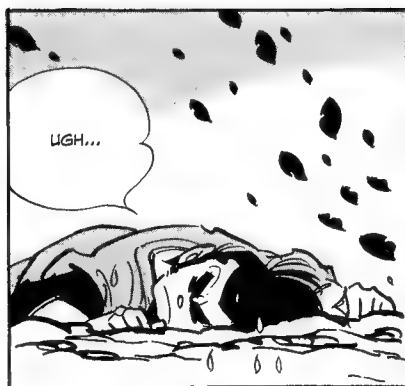
One year...

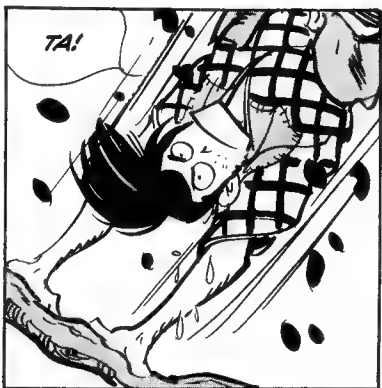
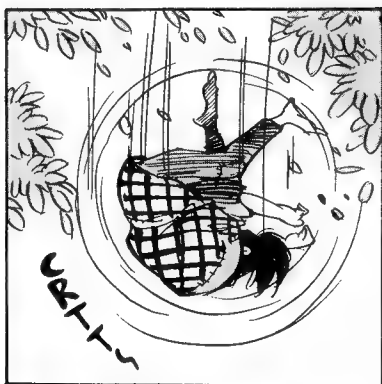


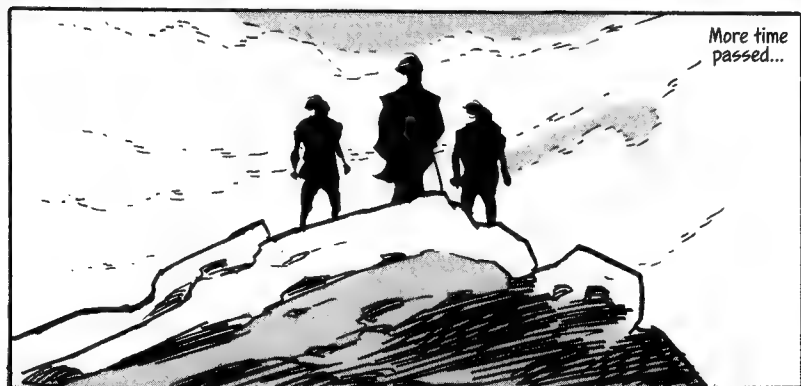
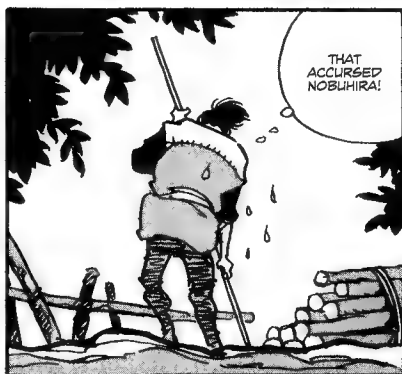
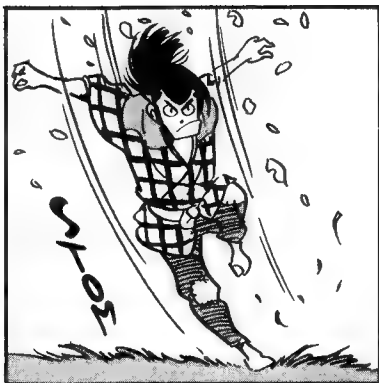
Then two...

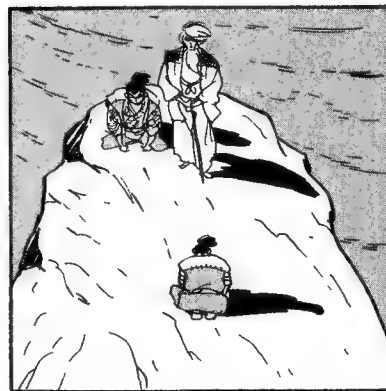
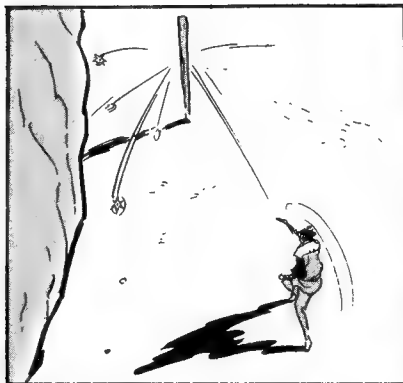


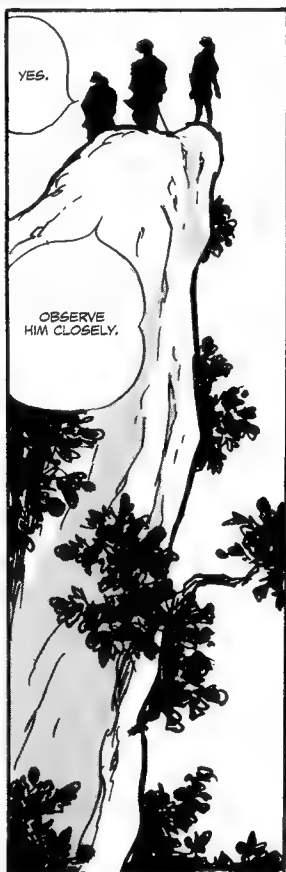


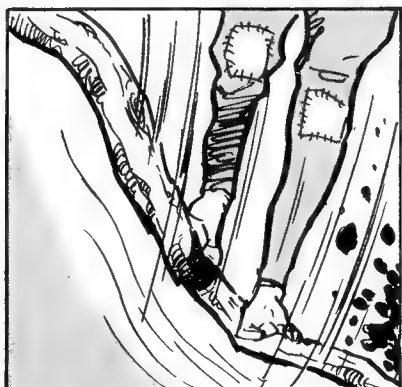
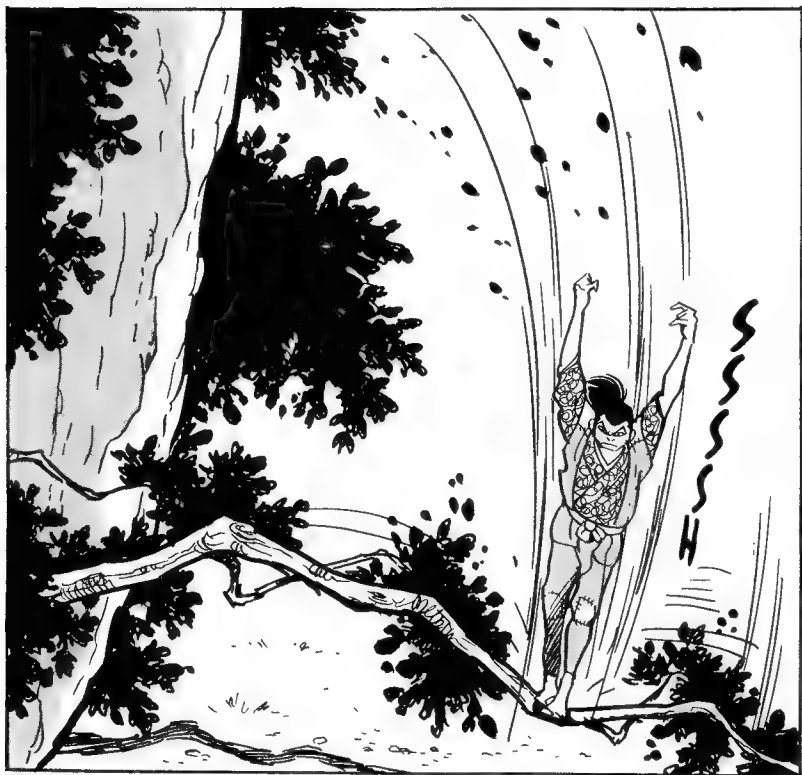


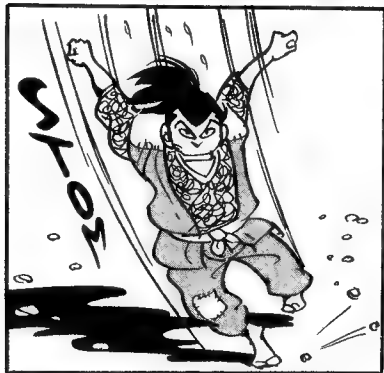
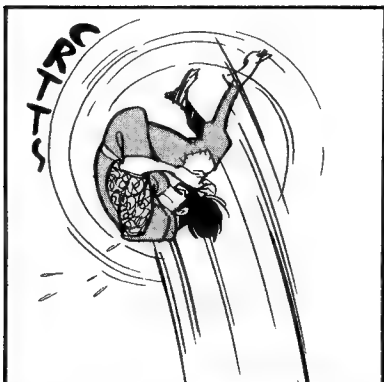
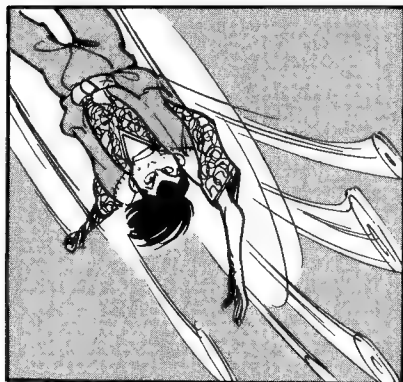


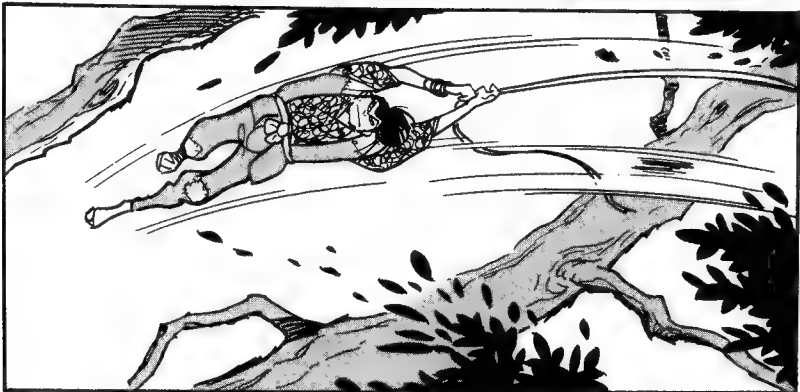
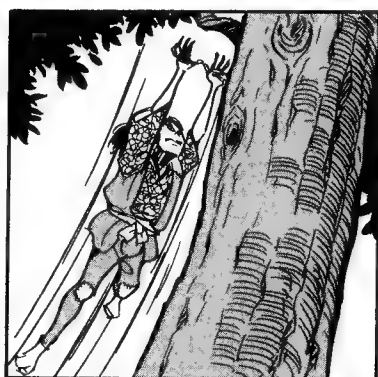
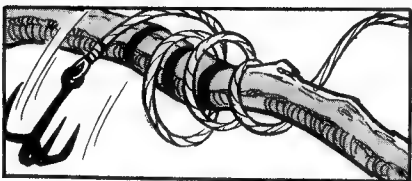
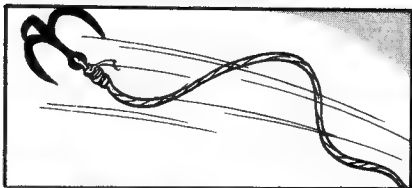
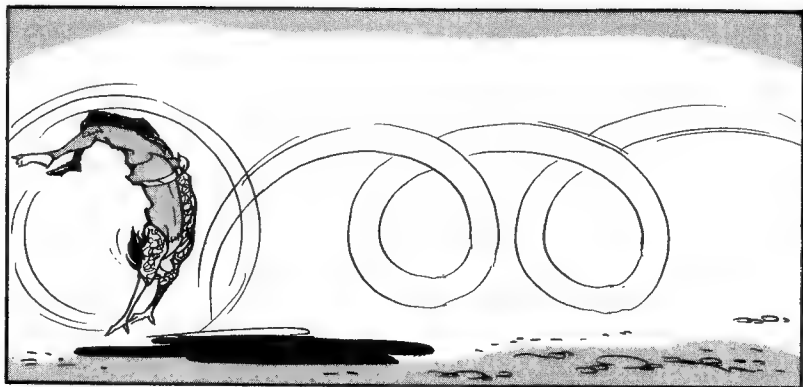


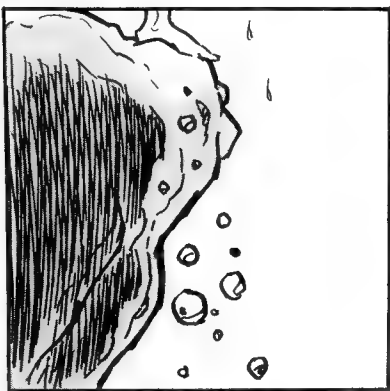


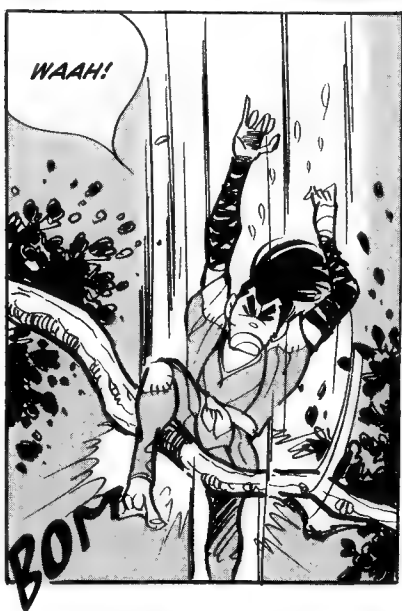
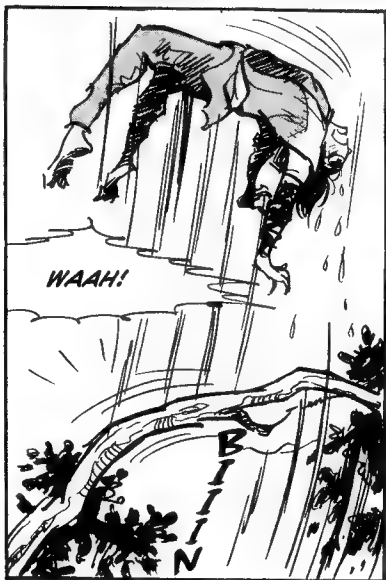


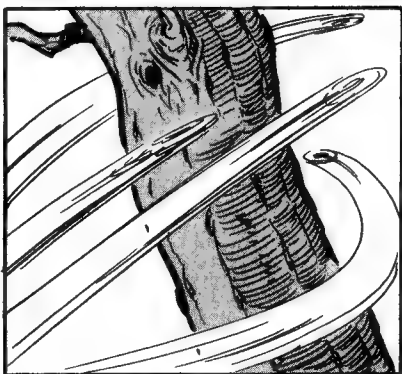
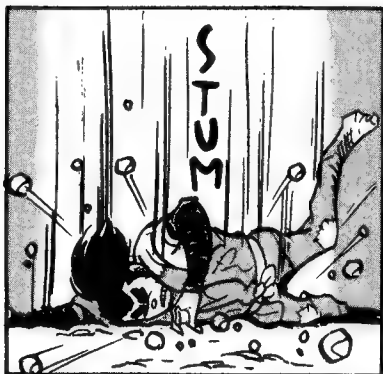


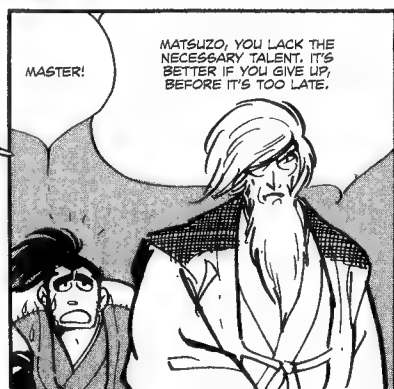
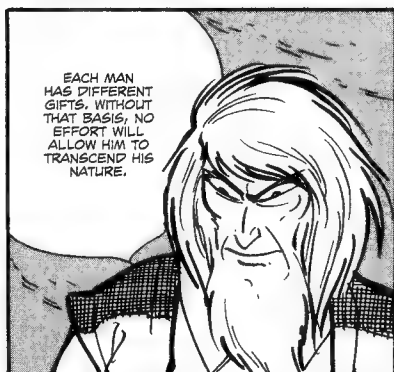
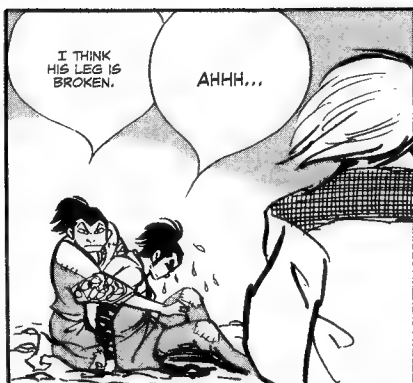


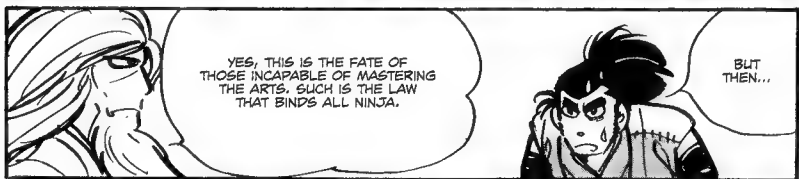
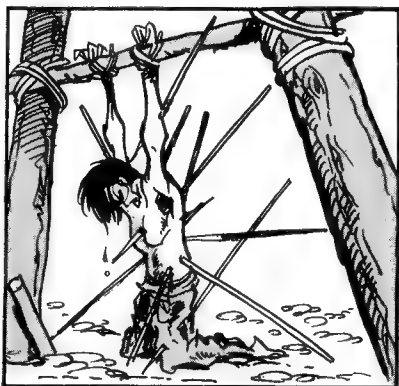




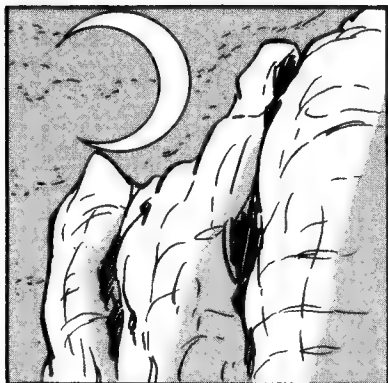


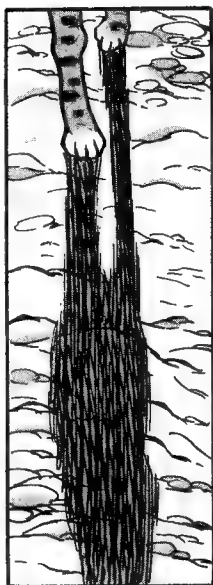
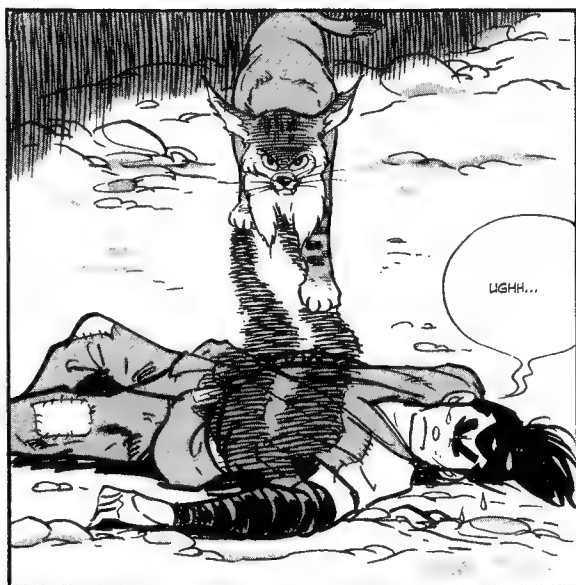


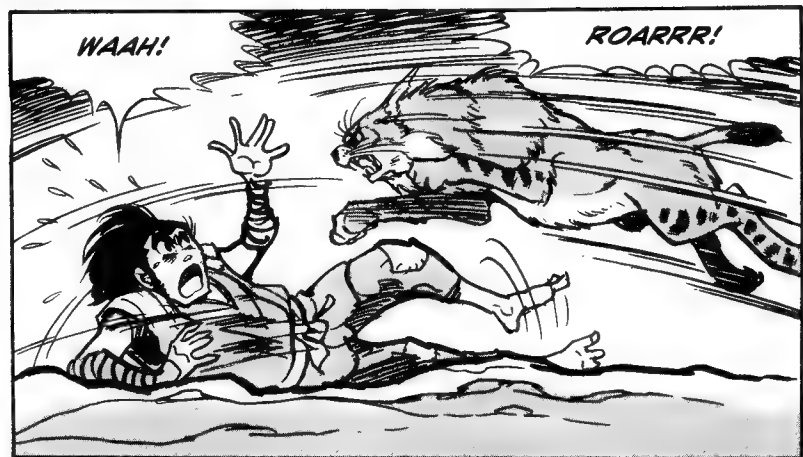


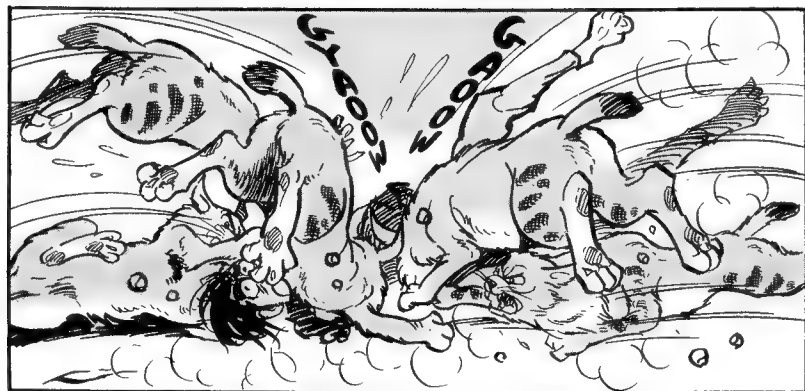


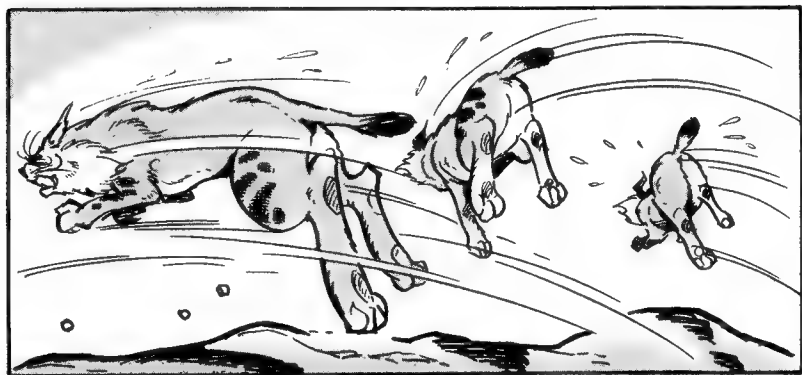




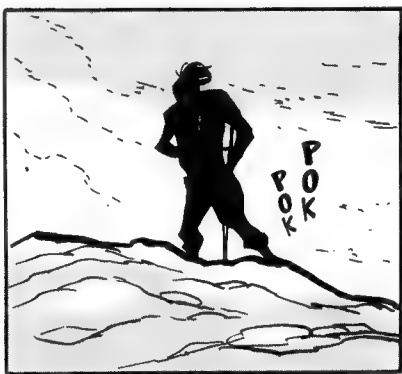
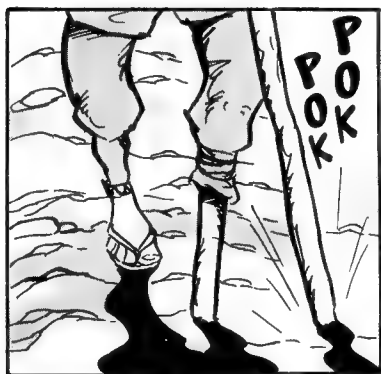
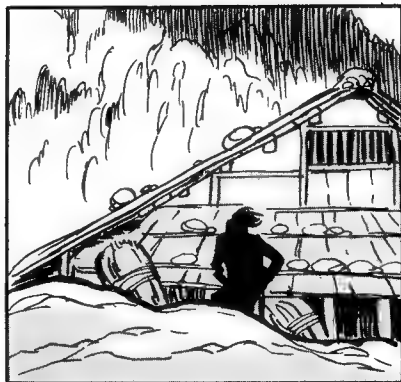




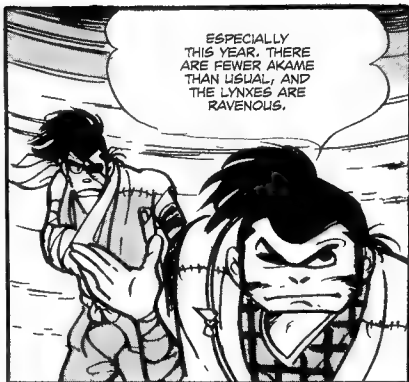












Just as it is pointless to teach a monkey to swim, or a dog to climb trees, so too the Farmer Matsuzou lacked the ability to learn the secret arts of the ninja. Exiled from the training grounds, he survived only at the cost of an eye and a leg. How can this talentless man, now crippled too, survive to exact his revenge?

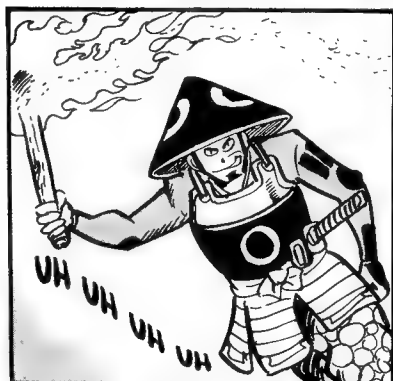
TL Note: The name Akame means "red eyes". Shirato will choose it as the name of his company, the Akame Production.

赤
AKAME
目

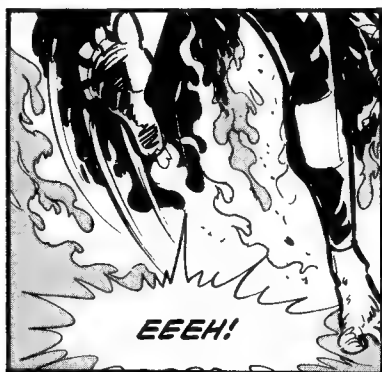
PART TWO

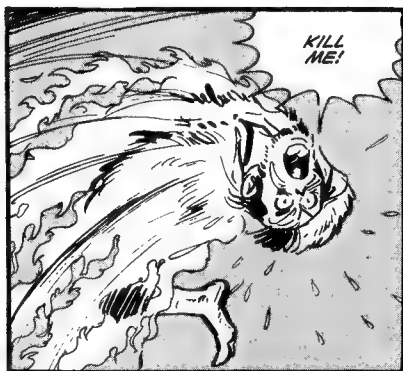
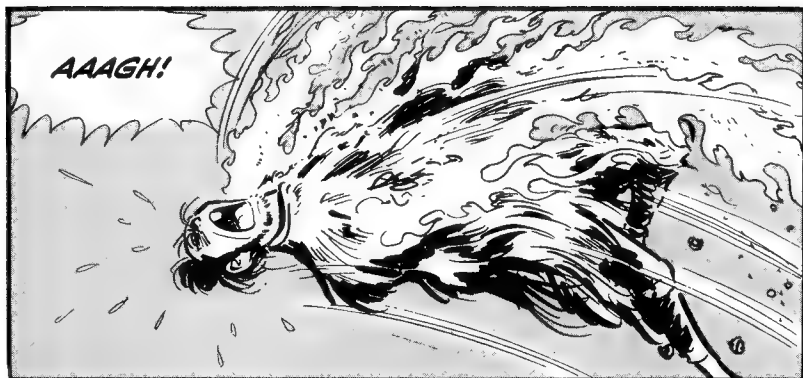


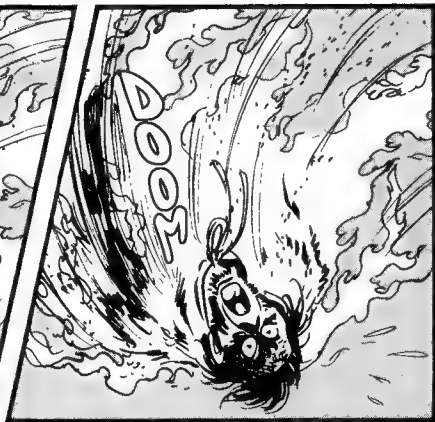
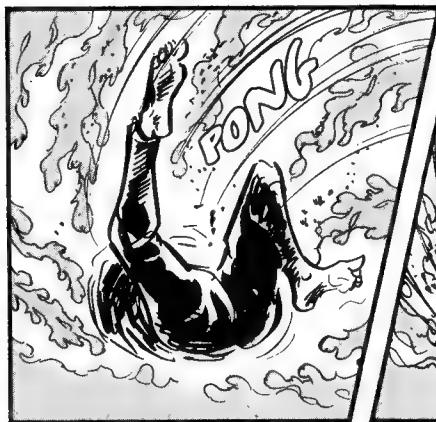


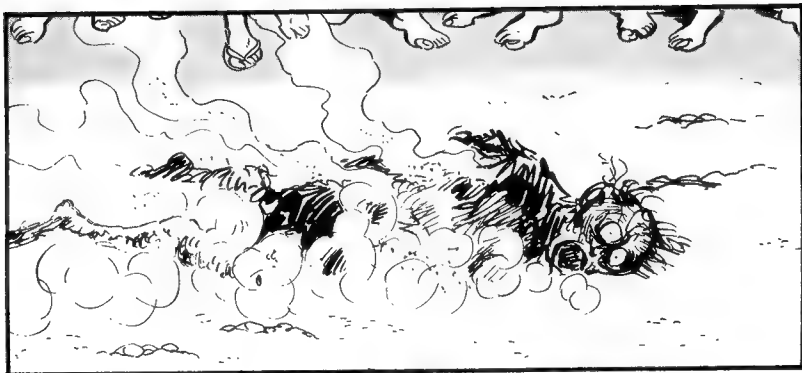


TL Note: Minodori (lit. straw raincoat dance) was a torture consisting on dressing disobedient peasants in straw overcoats and then setting them on fire.



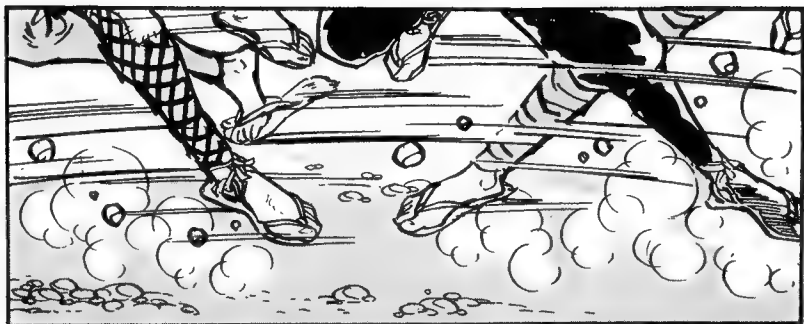


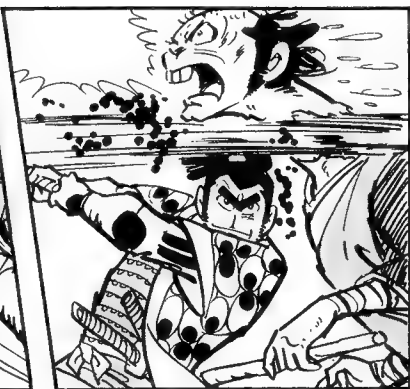












YOU
COWARDS CAN'T
EVEN COMPETE WITH
ME, UNDERSTAND?



HU HU
HU HU...
WHAT DO
YOU THINK?



AHAHAHA!
DON'T FORGET!

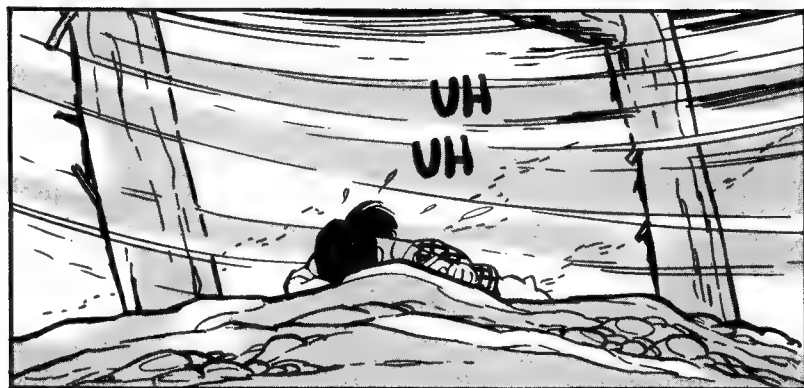
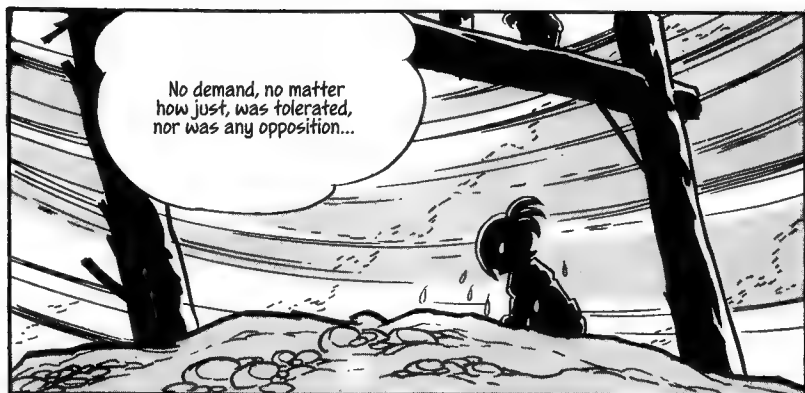


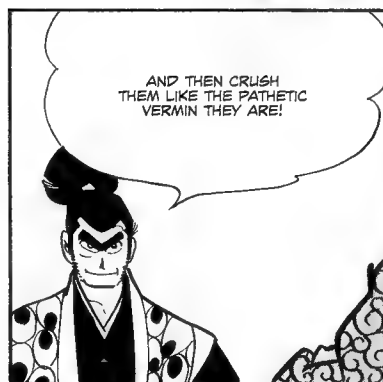
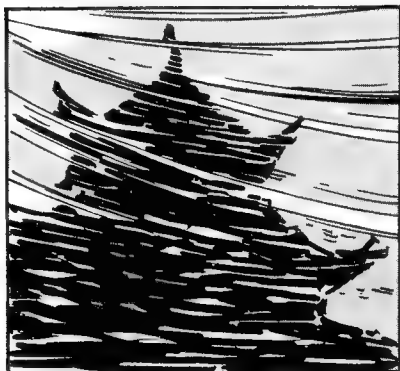
YOU'RE
POWERLESS!

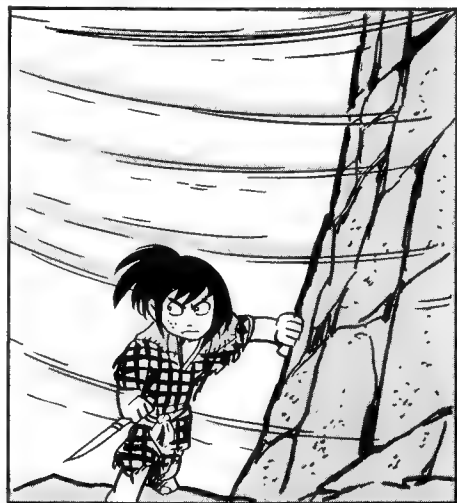
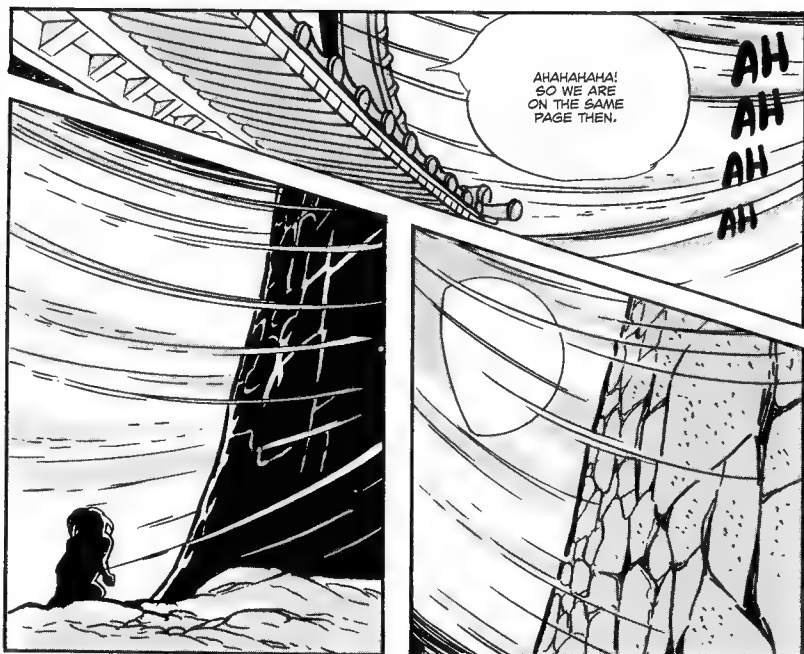


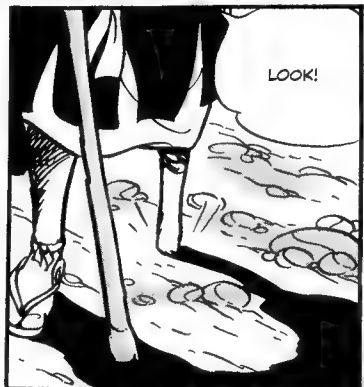
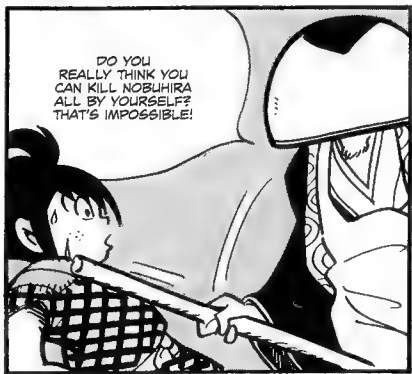
In the meantime,
the violence and despotism
of the Feudal Lord Nobuhira
Iyonokami continued...

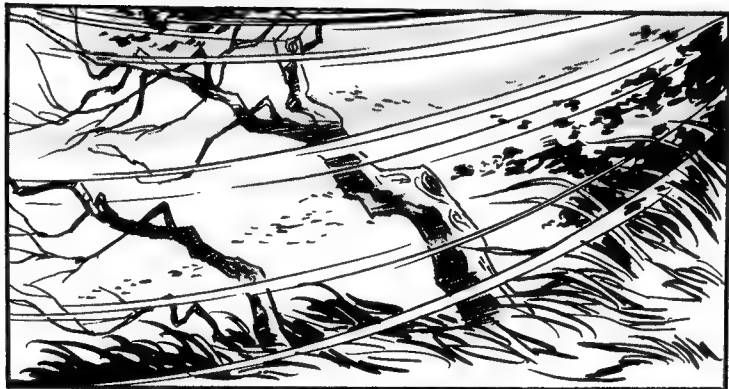




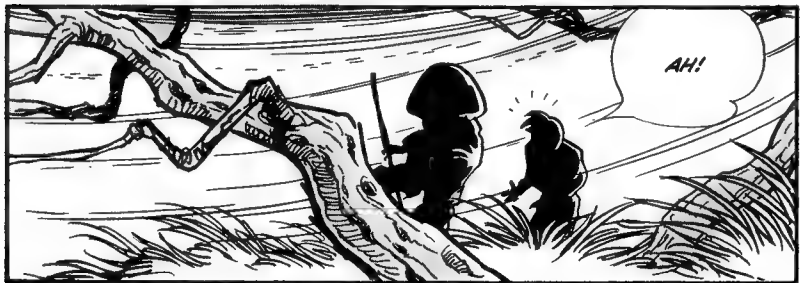




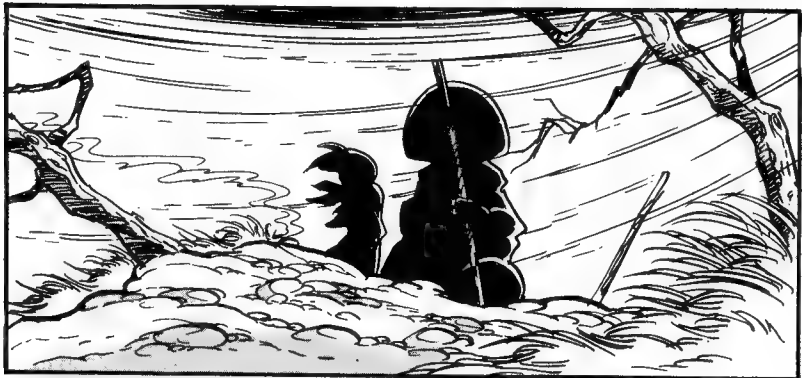
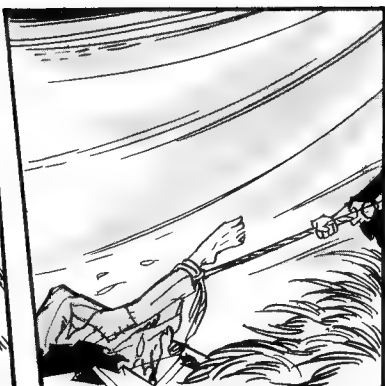
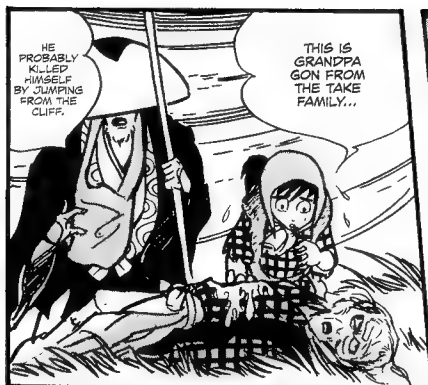


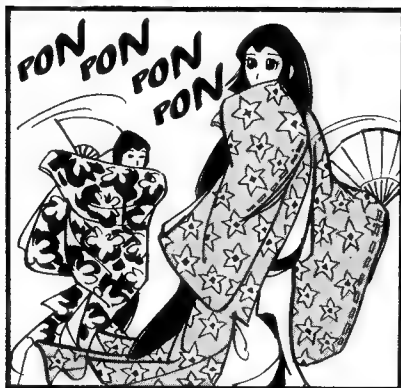
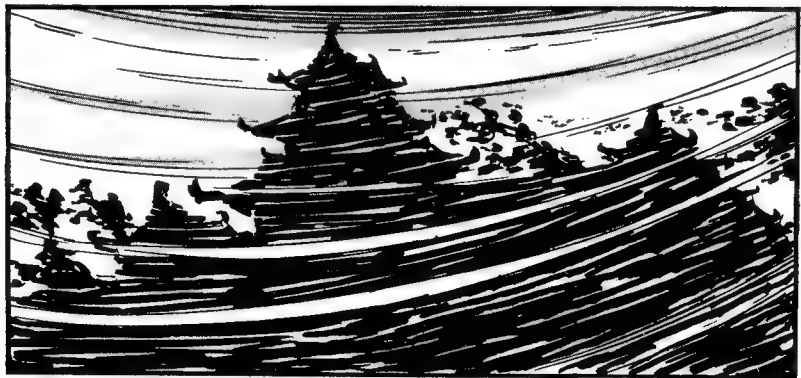


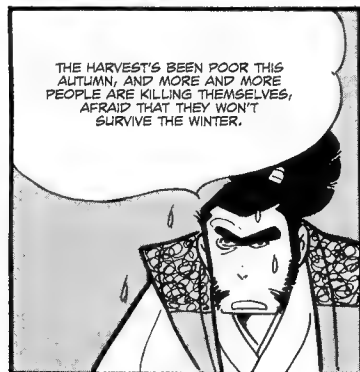
After
a while...
Winter
arrived...



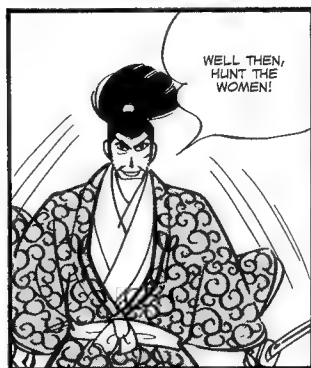
TL Note: Buddhist prayer, expression of worship for the buddha Amitabha.

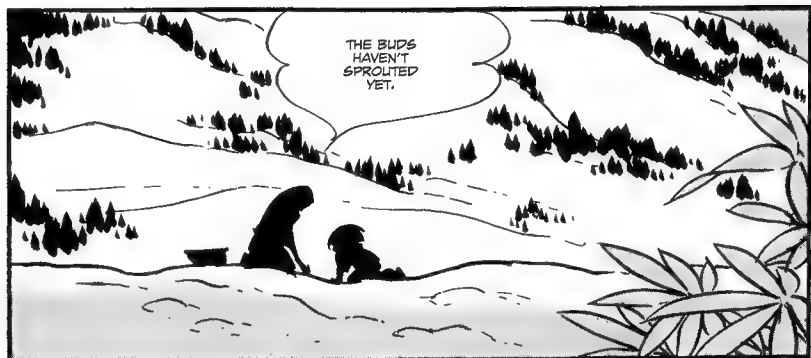


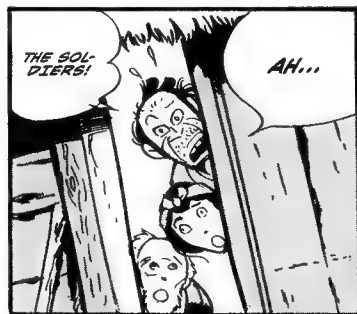




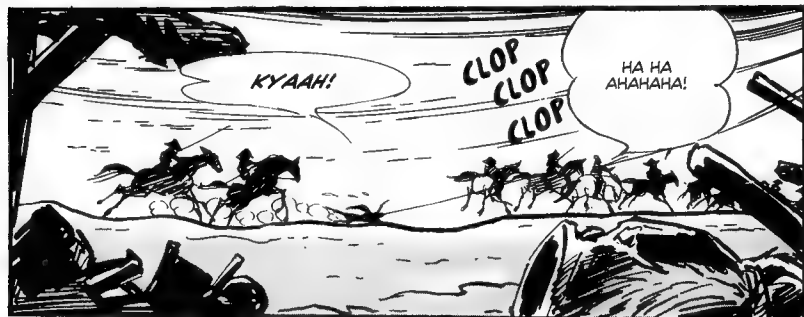
TL Note: Charity rice given at buddhist temples.

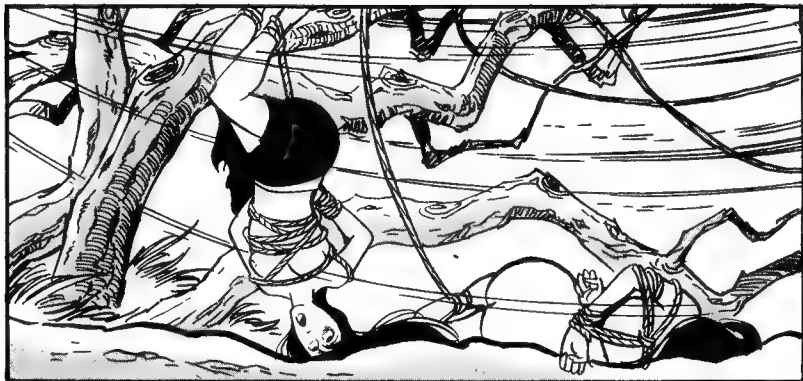


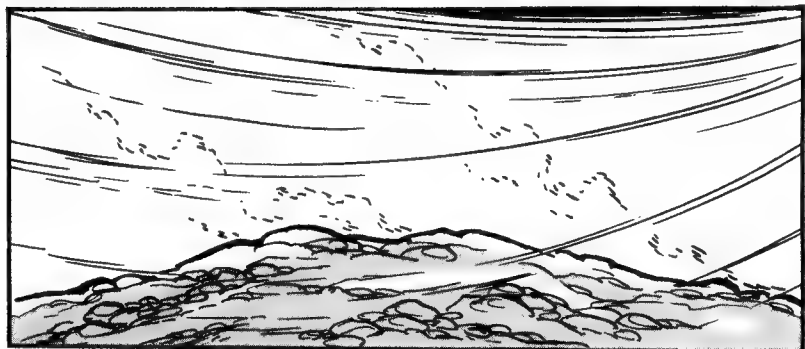
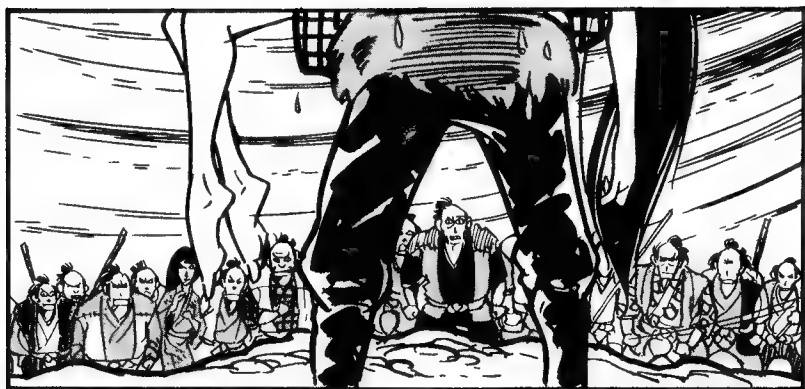


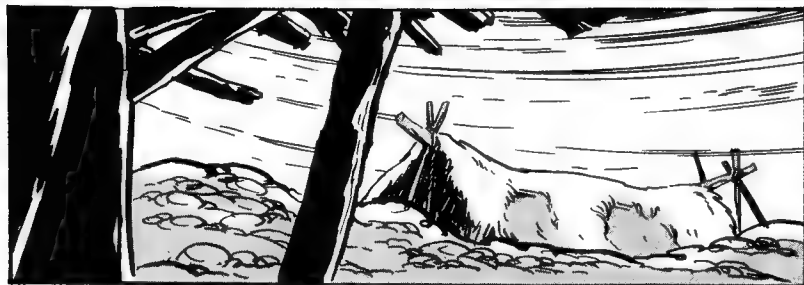






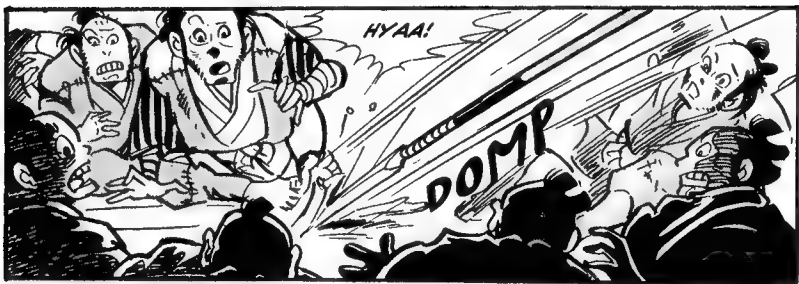
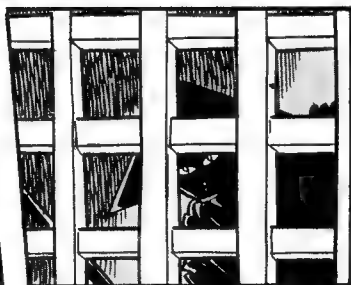




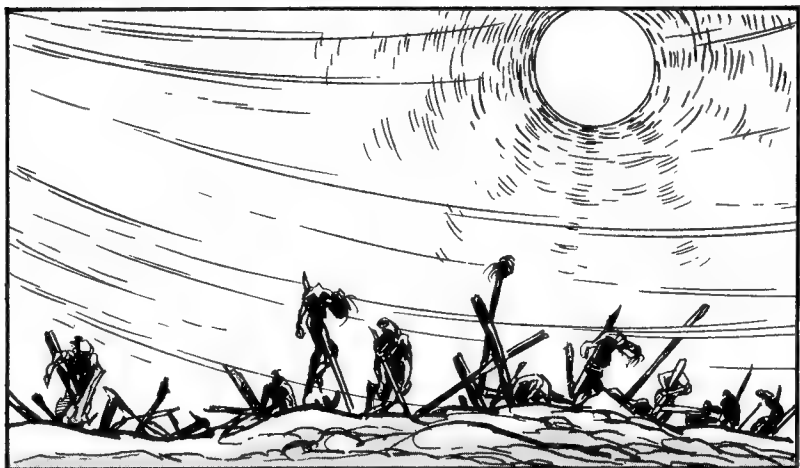


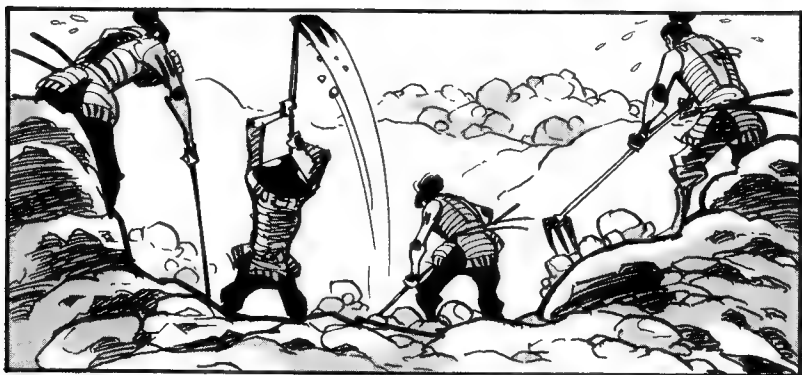


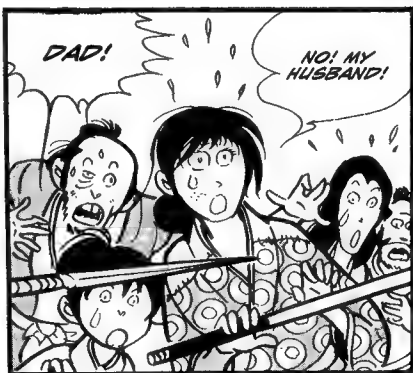
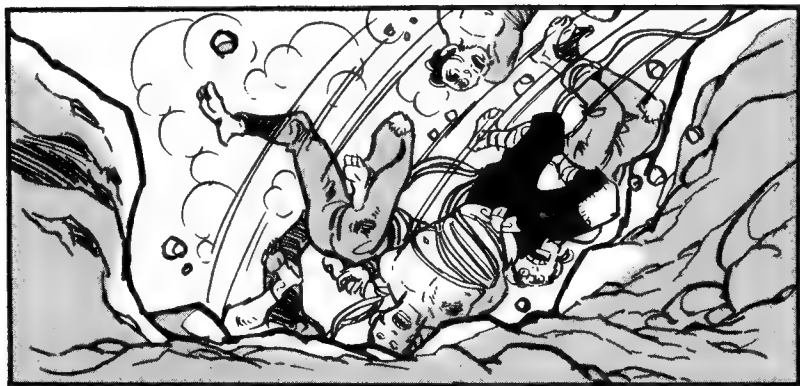


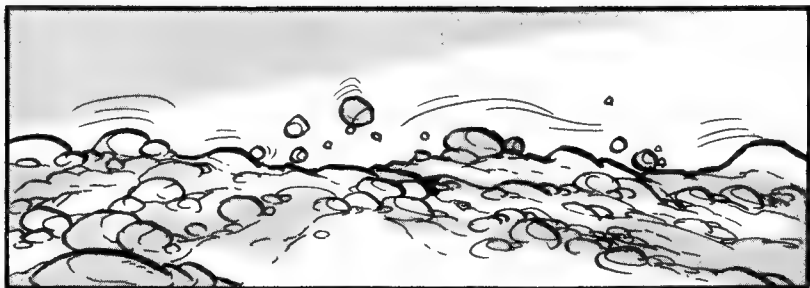




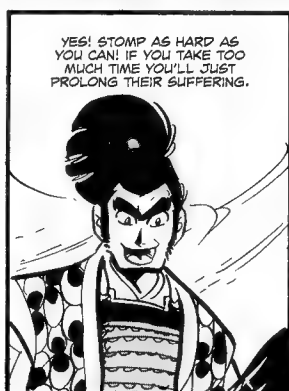


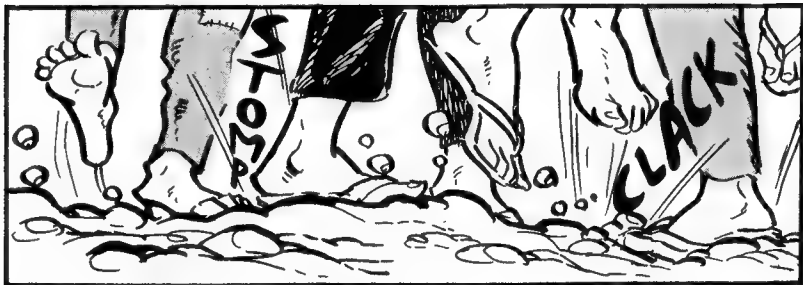








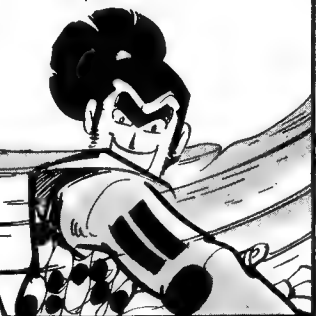




MY
DEAR!

FATHER,
FORGIVE ME!

HAHAHAHAHAHA!
DO YOU HEAR? THAT'S THE SOUND OF
THEIR SKULLS CRACKING! JUST SO YOU
REMEMBER, IT WAS YOU WHO KILLED
THEM WITH YOUR OWN HANDS.
NO, FEET!



NEVER FORGET! YOU
KILLED YOUR RELATIVES
WITH YOUR OWN HANDS!

HAHAHA!

Japanese troops used these same methods in China during the Second World War. The more one group is oppressed, the more it commits atrocities against another. This happens even to this day! Perhaps it's due to the sad history behind us.



NO ONE
CAN HELP
US.

WE DID
NOTHING TO
DESERVE
THIS...



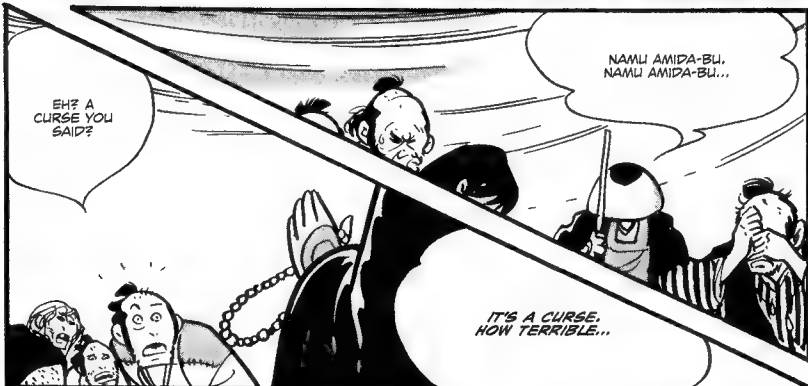
B...BUT WHY
MUST WE SUFFER
SUCH THINGS?

AH, IT'S
HORRIBLE!

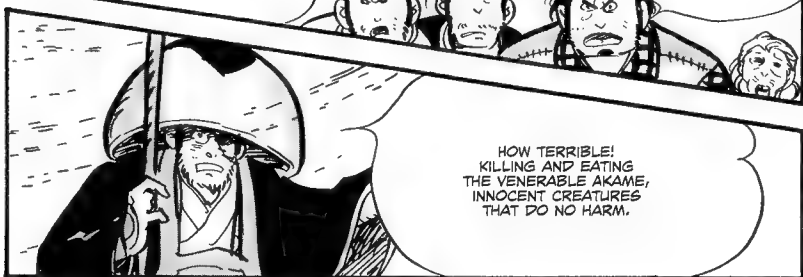
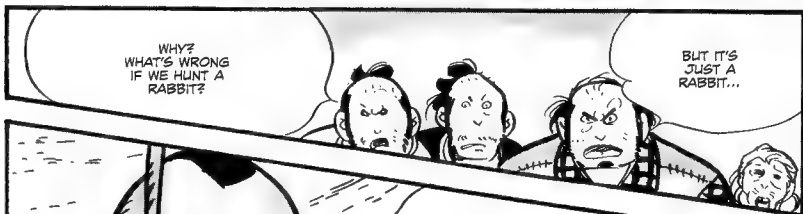
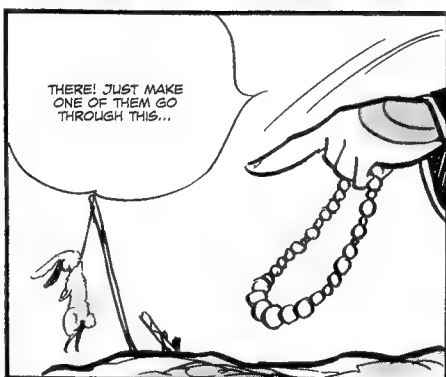
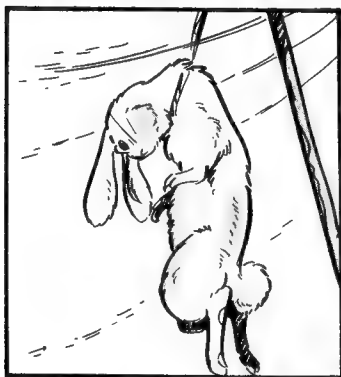
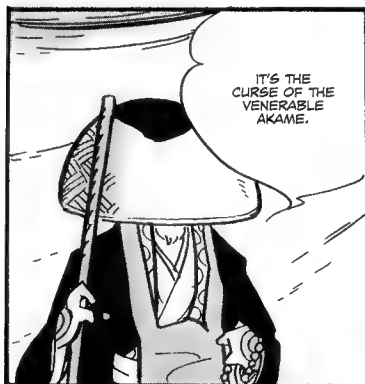


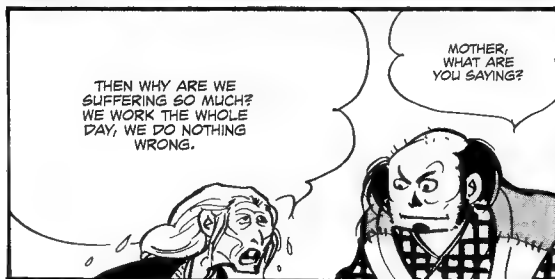
EH? A
CURSE YOU
SAID?

NAMU AMIDA-BU,
NAMU AMIDA-BU...

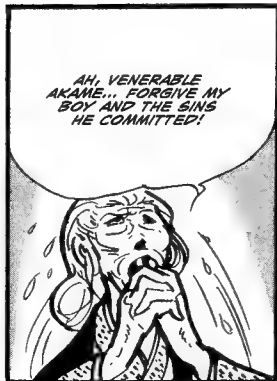


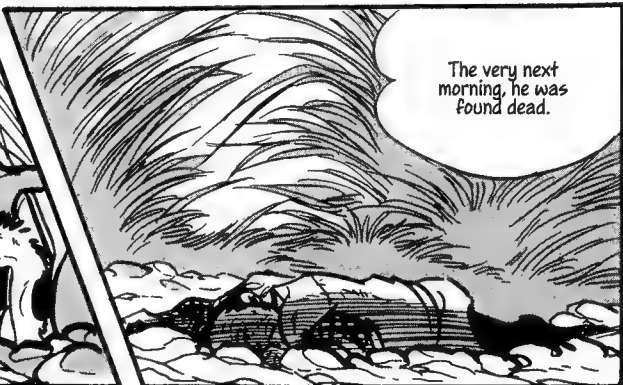
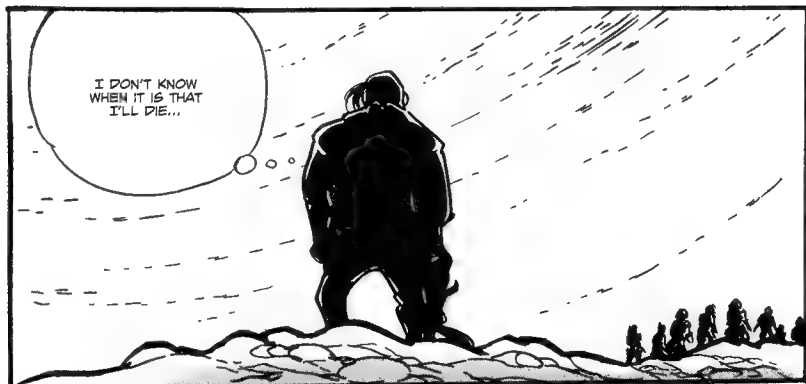
IT'S A CURSE.
HOW TERRIBLE...

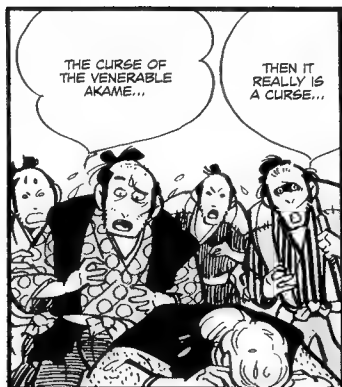




Sure enough, the main source of sustenance in this region was seafood and the numerous rabbits. There would be nobody except infants who had not partaken of them.

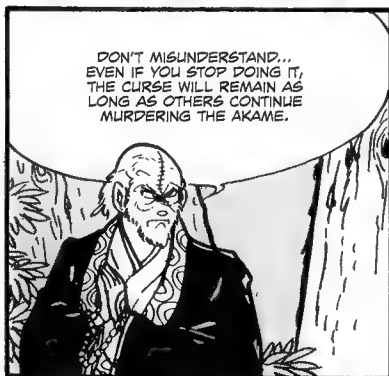


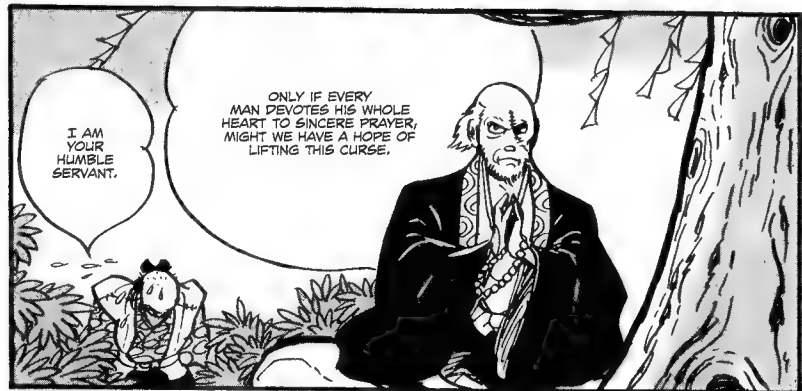
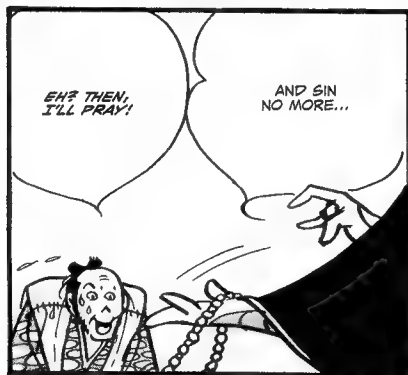


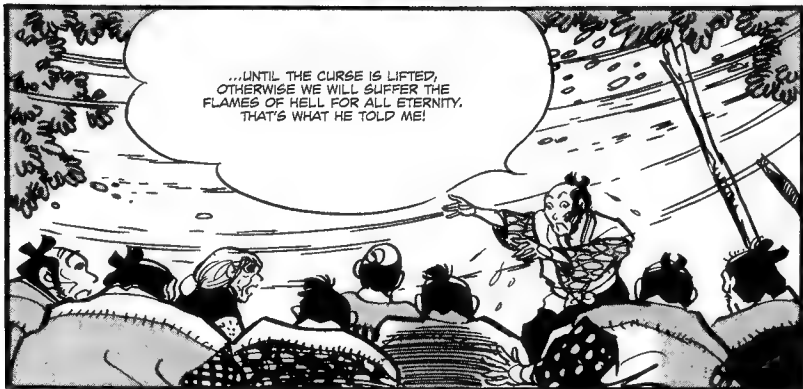
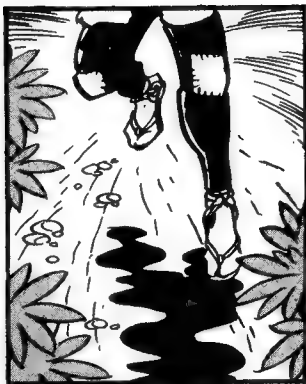


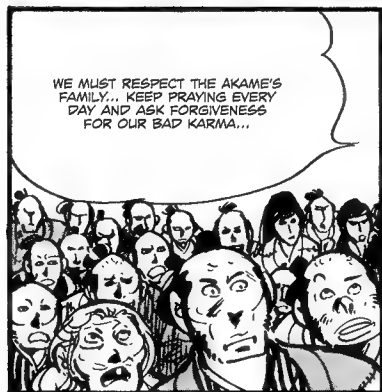
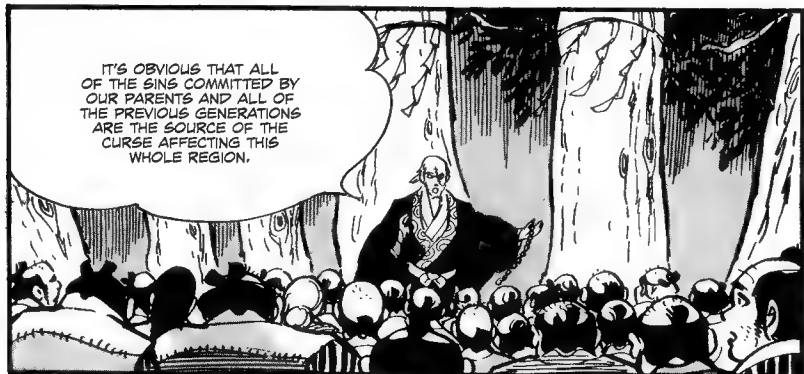
Tome's death was most likely just chance. But still, it inspired belief in the curse amongst the farmers. Or perhaps this was just the plot of a certain someone...

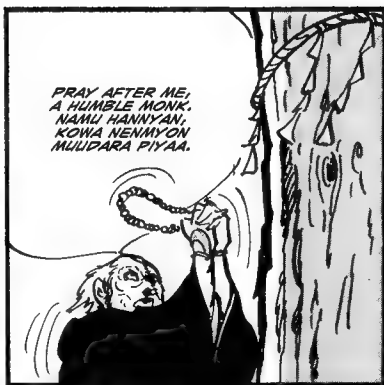






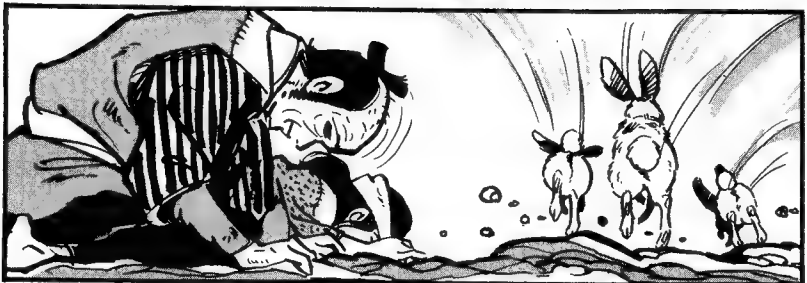
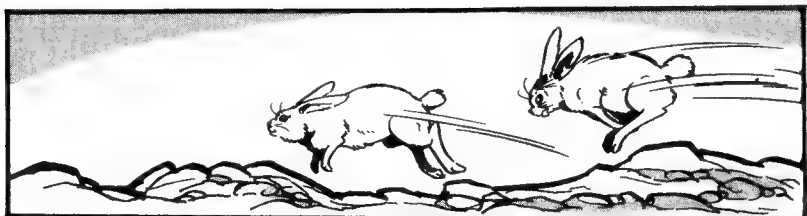


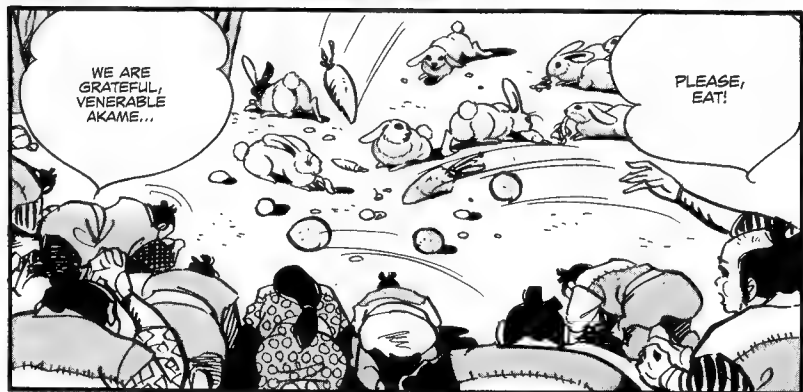
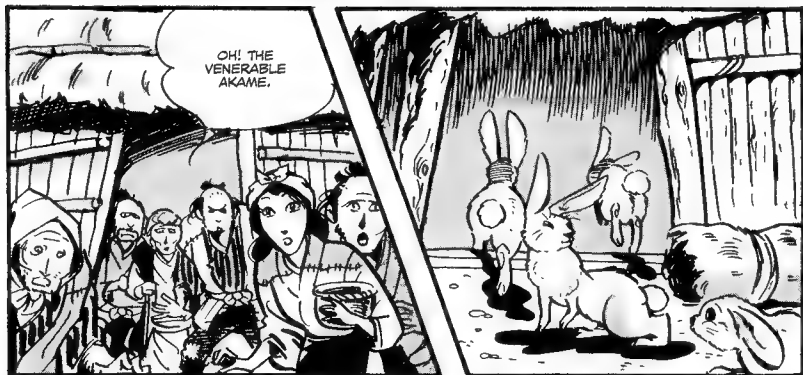


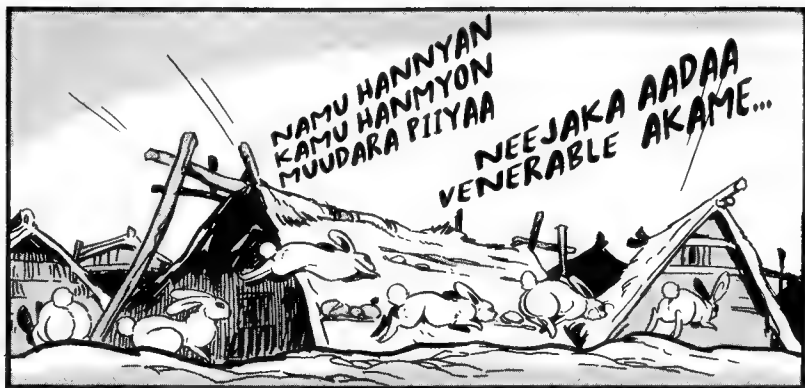


Akameism spread rapidly through the villages. Many might consider it absurd that so many could believe in such a religion, but in truth it's not so hard to believe. I myself am an atheist who has never believed in any God or Buddha, but I understand the mindset of those who approach religion as they mature and take their places in the adult world, realising their limits and trying to keep pace with a society that marches swiftly onwards. It's like a drowning man clutching at a straw... so too do those facing hardships rely on religion, to allow them to press onwards in their lives. Even in our age there are people believing in Buddhism, Christianity, or any one of the new religions. Keeping in mind how easily these spiritualists can manipulate their followers, it is surely no surprise that people from that age, living in the most squalid of conditions, would turn to a philosophy like Akameism to seek happiness in the next life. And, just as in the past, those who create and spread these new religions have intentions that differ from those who follow them...



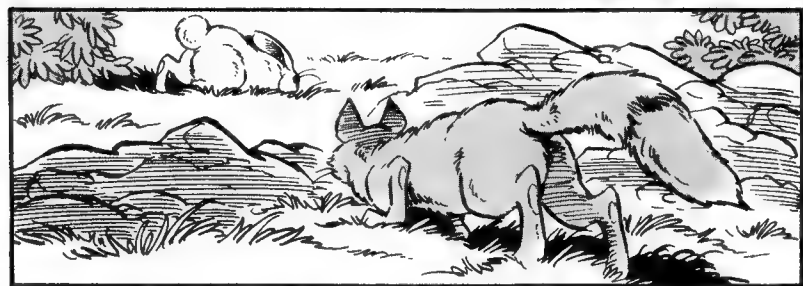


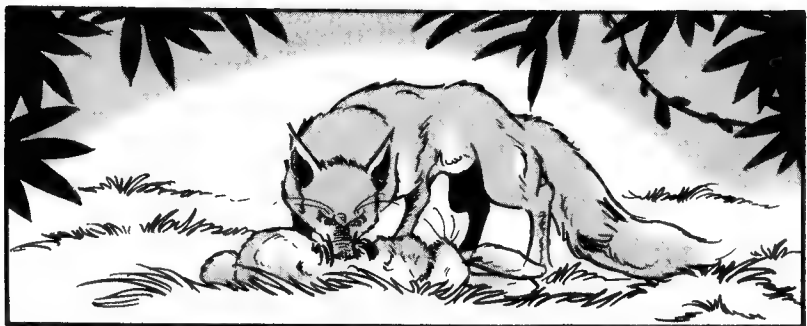
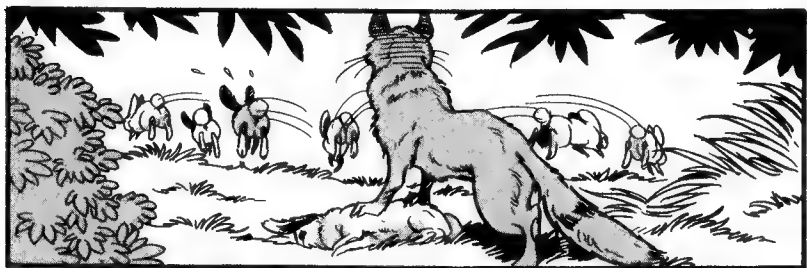
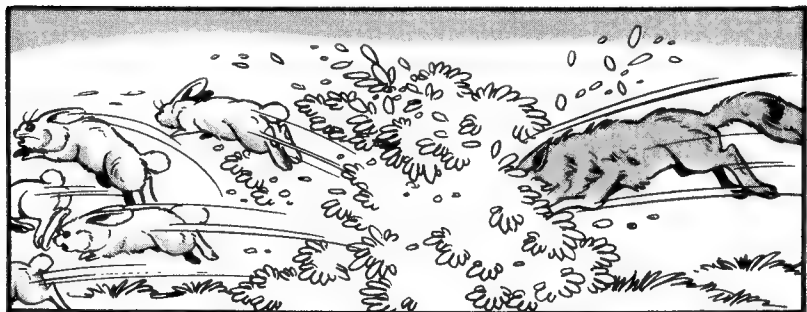
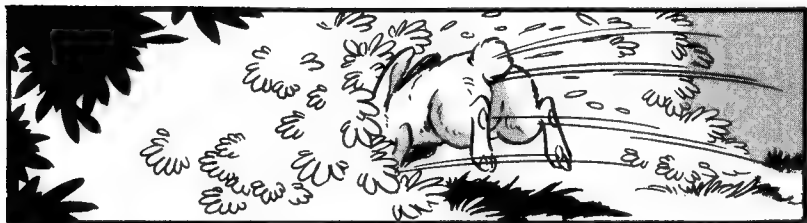


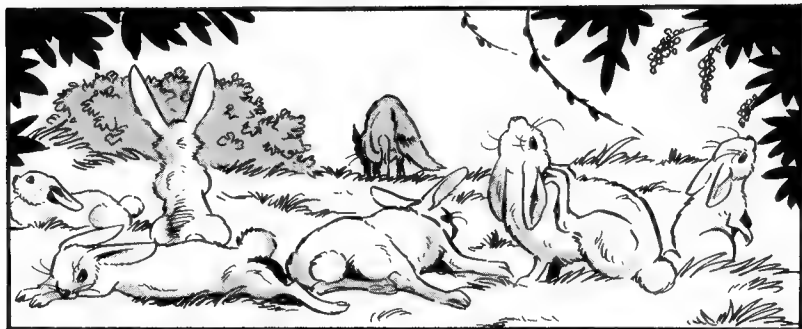
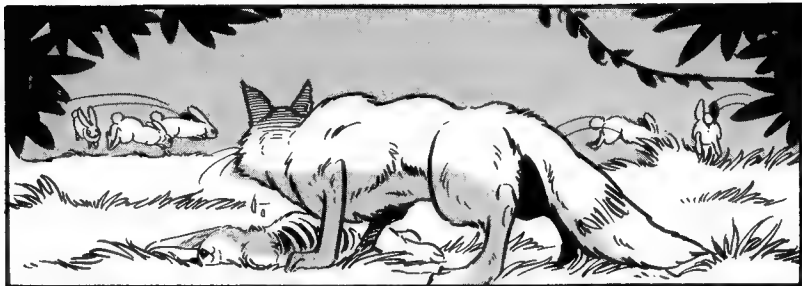


And so the more Akameism spread, the greater the population of the rabbits grew under its protection. The animals are most shrewd, and once they realised they would not be harmed, they entered all the villages without fear.

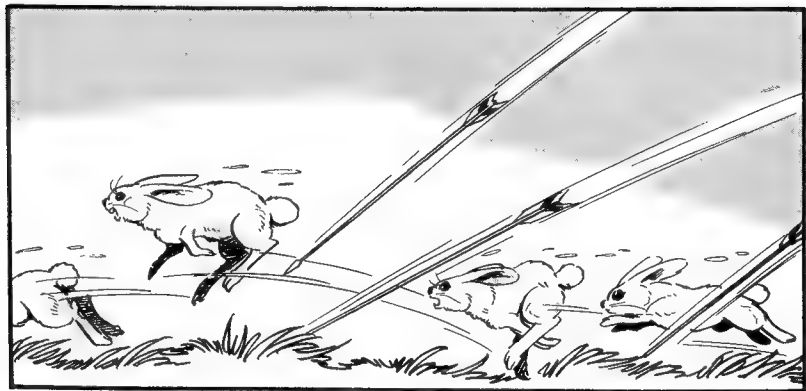
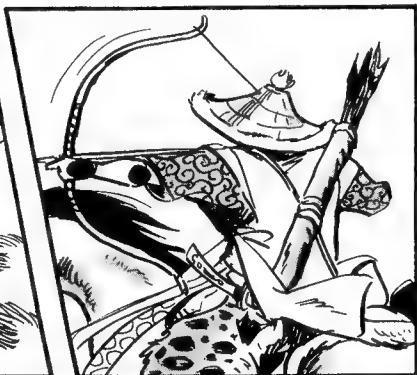
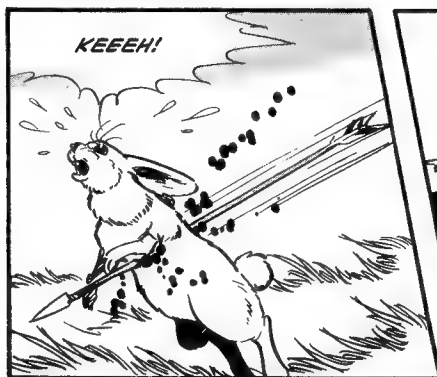
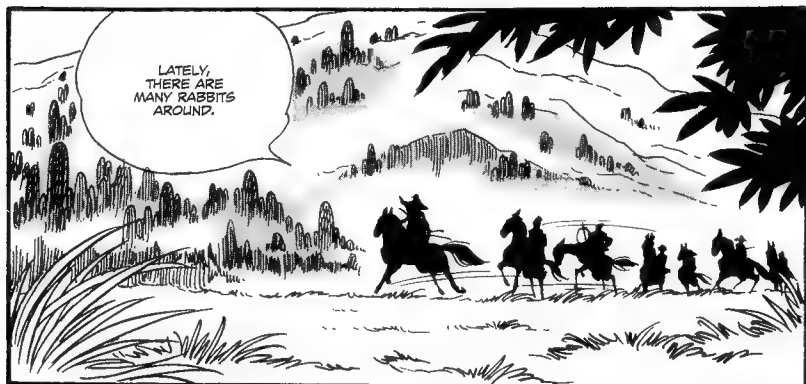


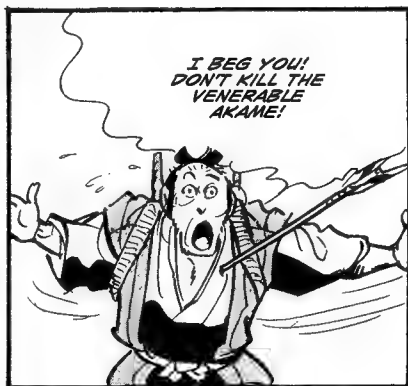
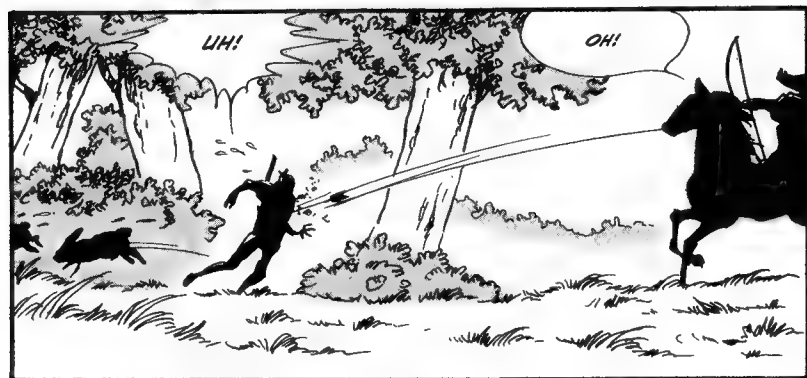
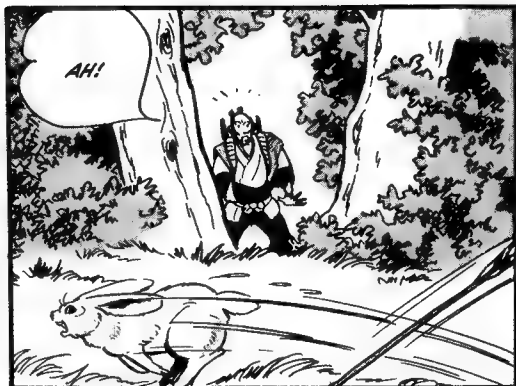


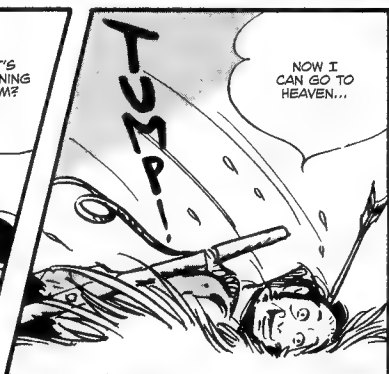


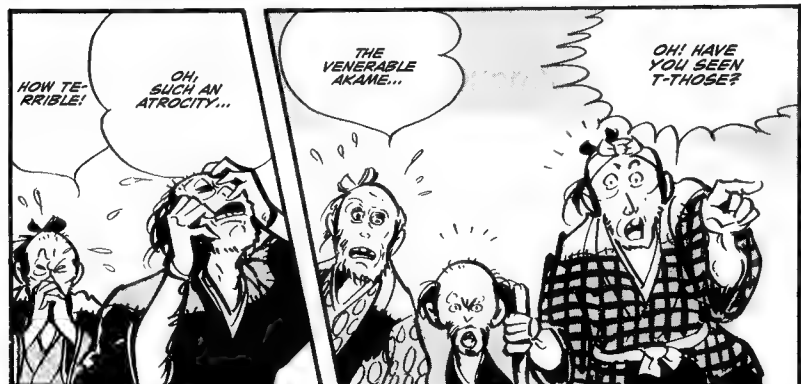
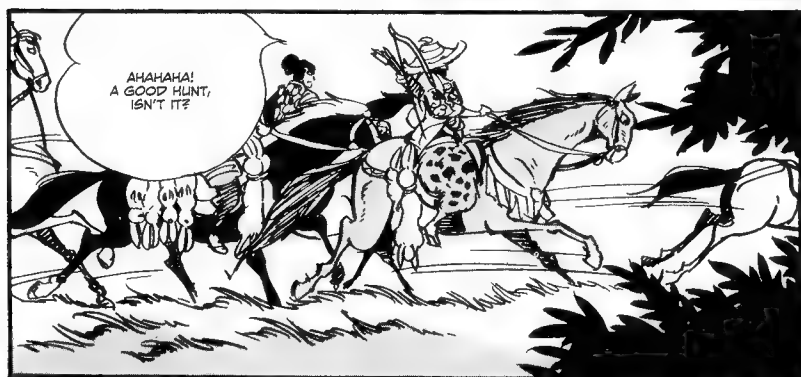
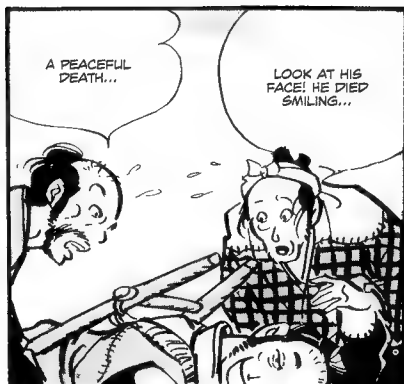


The proliferative capacity of the rabbits outgrew the appetites of the predators who fed on them, so they continued to reproduce. At this rate there must have been millions, and a single bush without a rabbit inside couldn't be found in any field or forest. Even in Seton's Wild Animals it is mentioned how rapidly rabbits reproduce... Anyways, they reproduce many times a year, with the pregnant delivering bunnies within thirty days. They usually deliver five or six bunnies, who themselves generate more when reaching maturity. Therefore, even from a single mating pair, the increases in population can be substantial. Having myself had the opportunity to look after rabbits when I was young, I can confirm this.

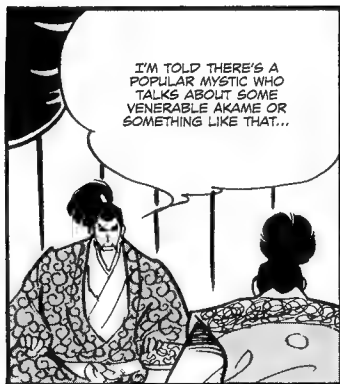


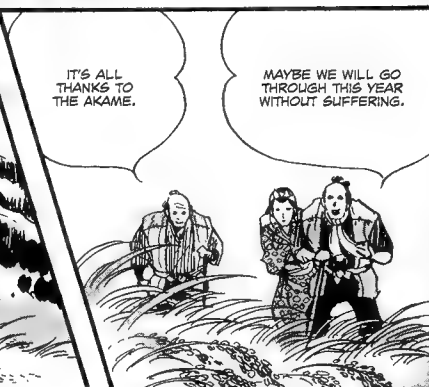
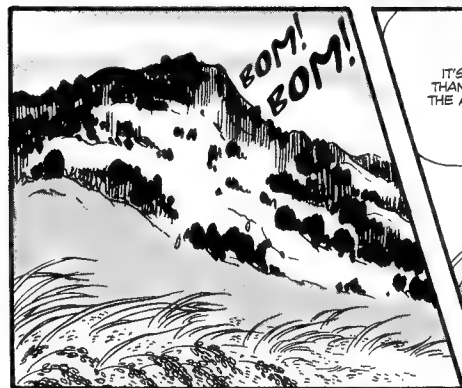
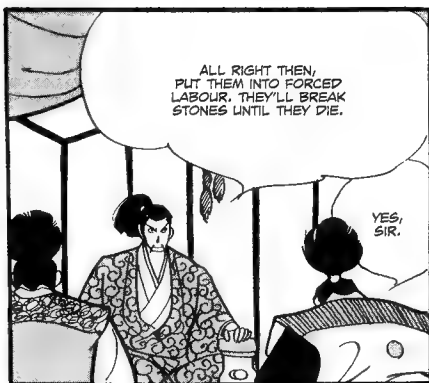


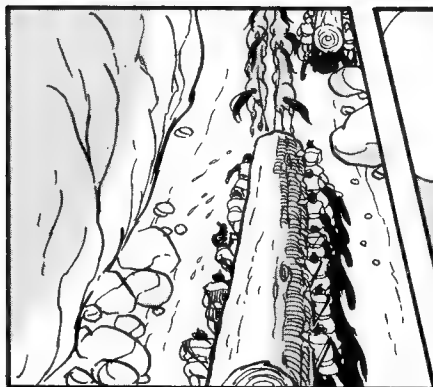
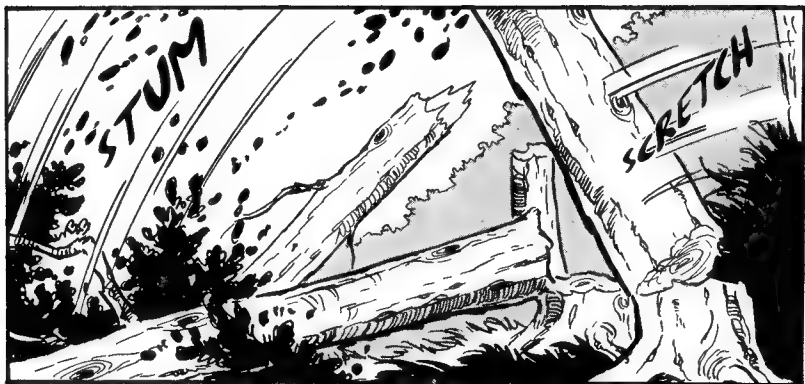


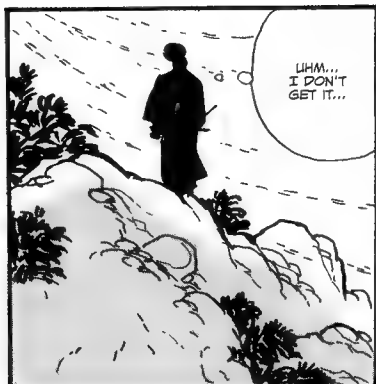






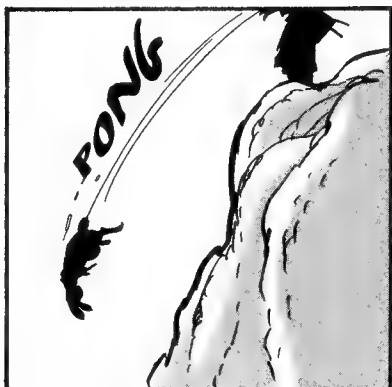




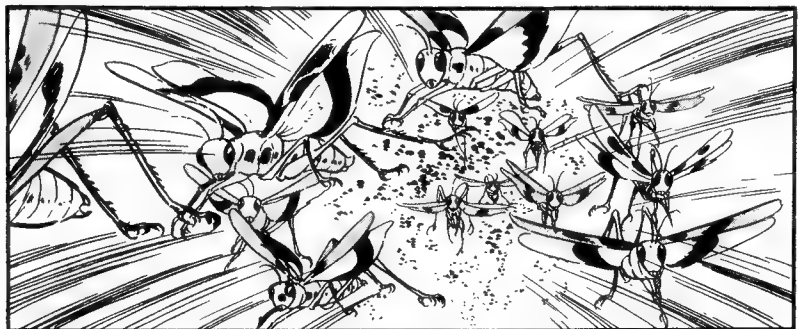
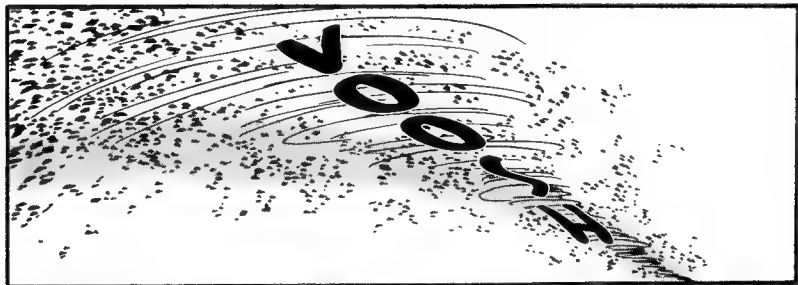


It's no wonder that Ikkaku doesn't understand why the farmers believe in the Akame. That is because he is not one of them. Rather, he is the very one that placed them in this situation! As a general rule, those who harm others do not understand the extent of the pain that they inflict.

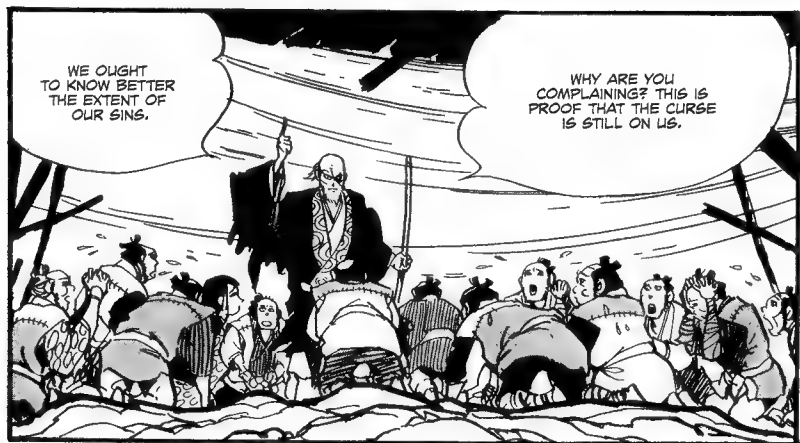


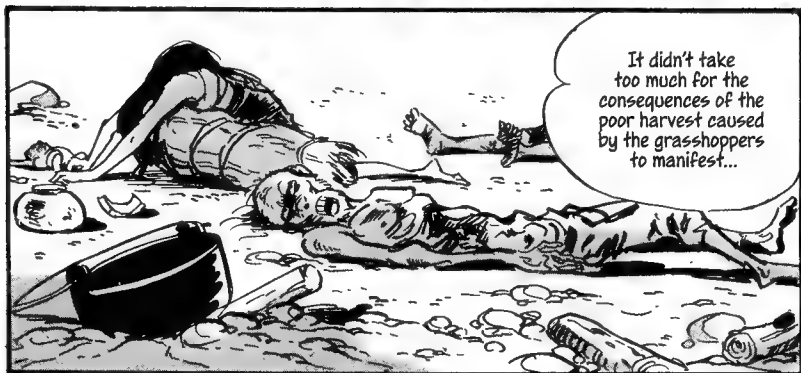


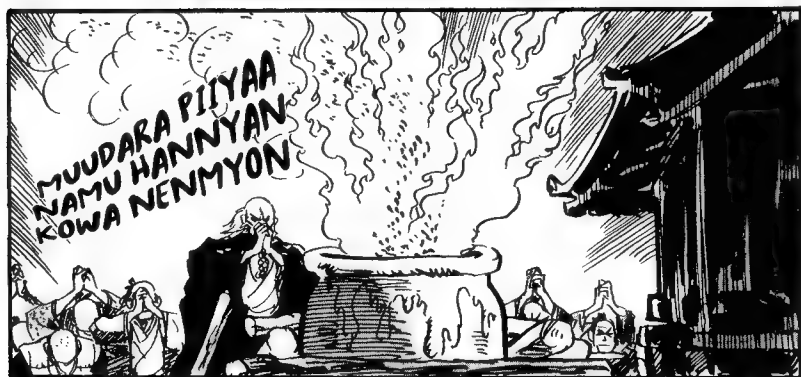




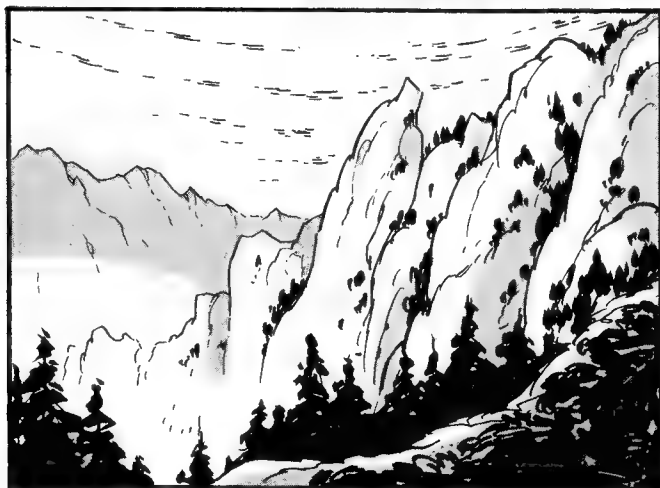
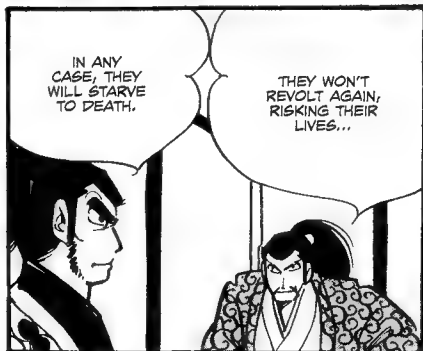




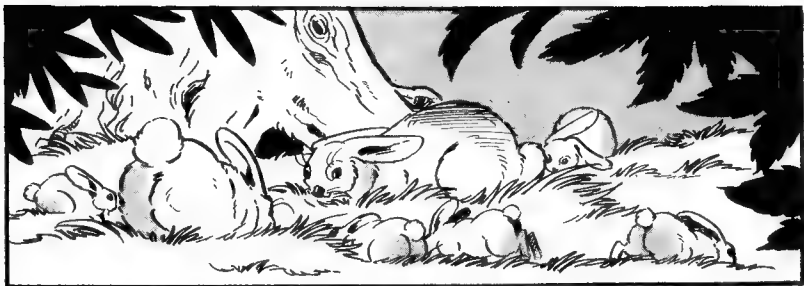






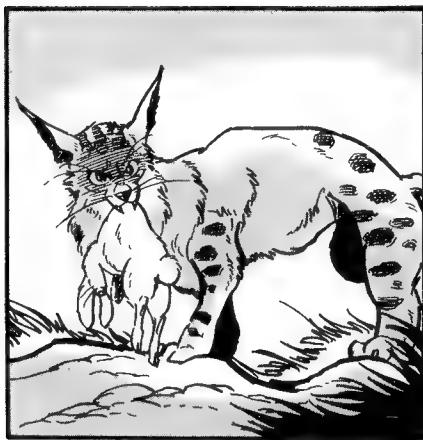
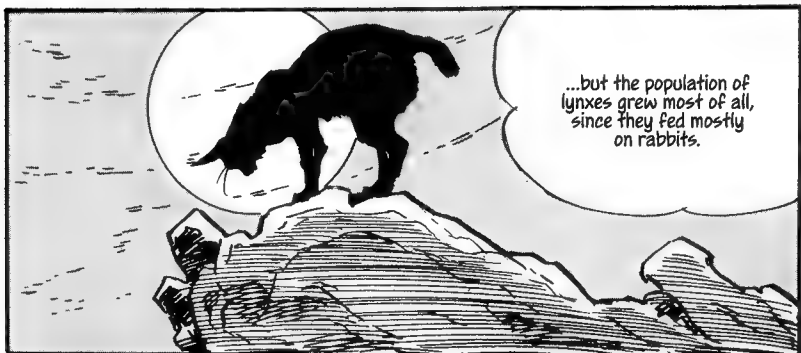
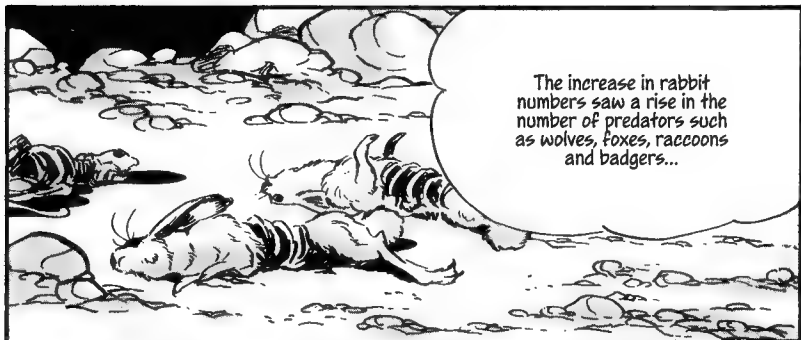


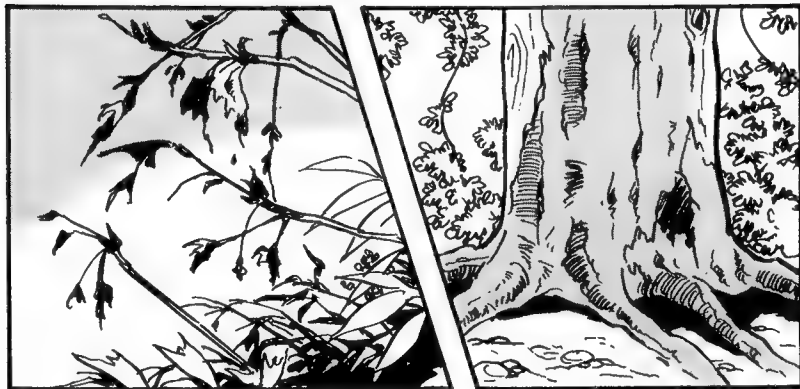
At the same time, without the Lord knowing, something terrible was happening to the farmers.

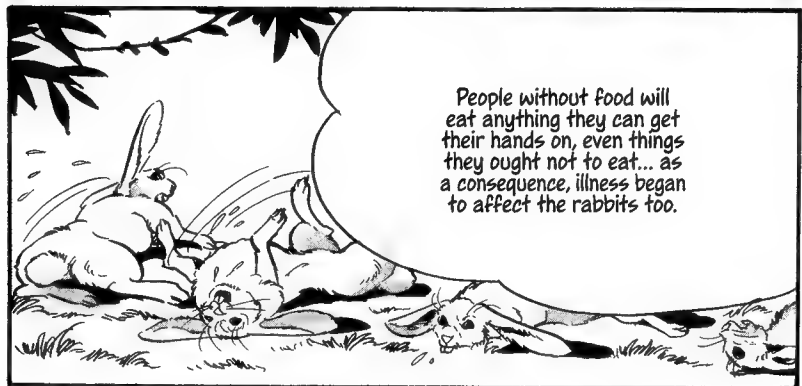
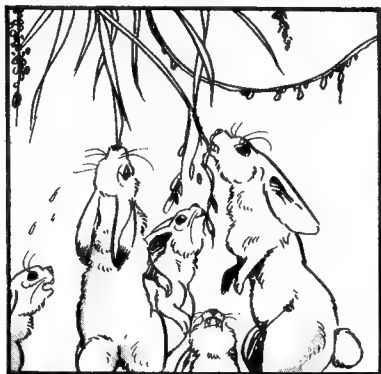


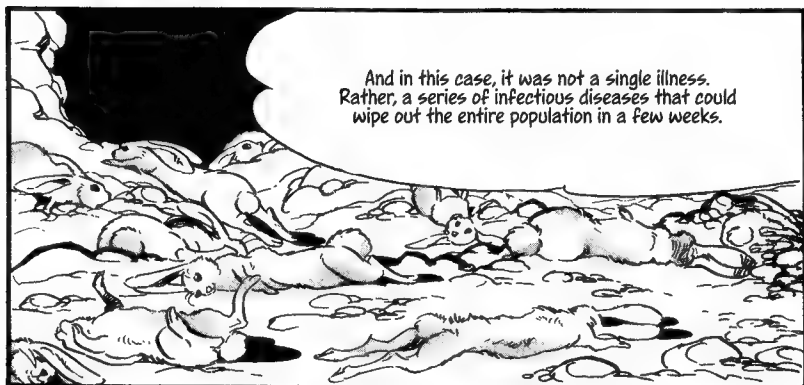
According to the law of nature, as the population of an animal grows, so too does that of its predators. It is by feeding and being fed upon that the natural equilibrium amongst living beings is maintained, for if the numbers of prey decrease, so too do those of its predators. This is called the food chain.

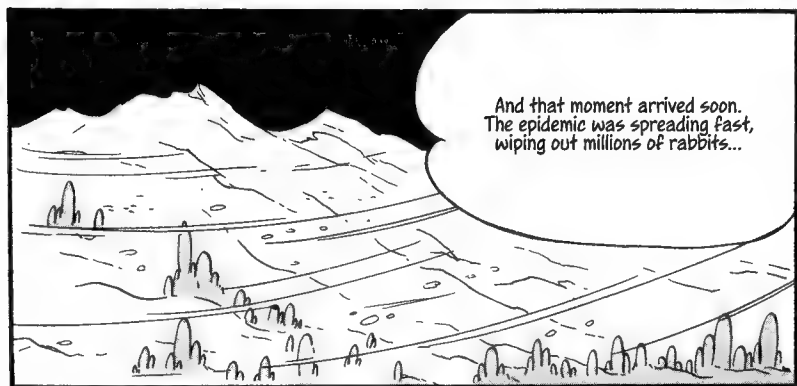
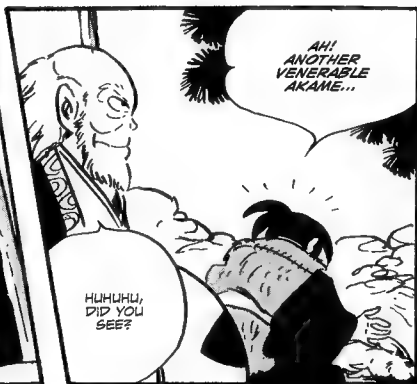






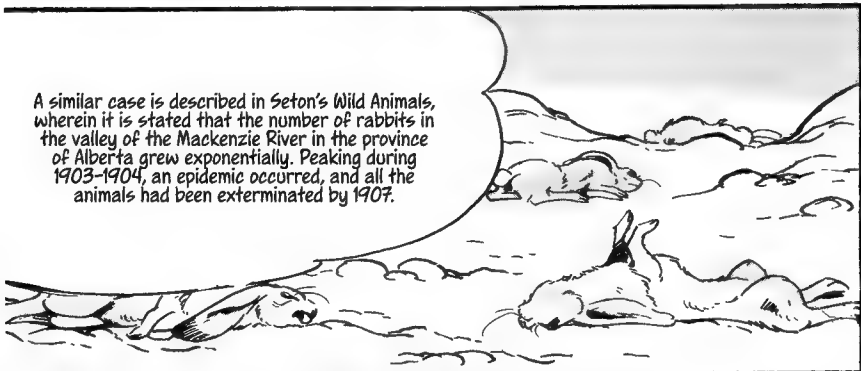




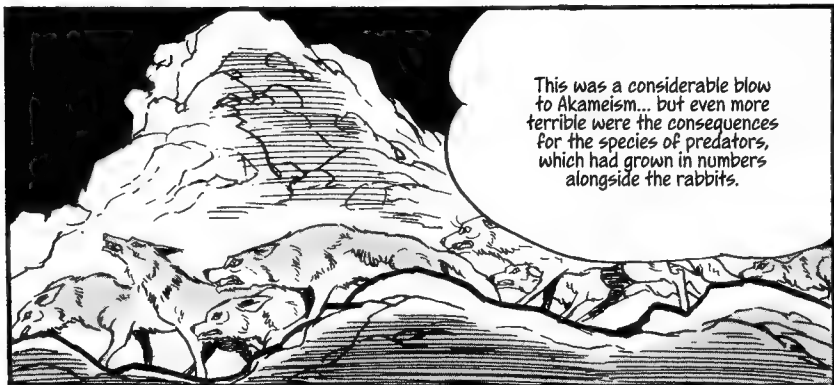




A similar case is described in Seton's Wild Animals, wherein it is stated that the number of rabbits in the valley of the Mackenzie River in the province of Alberta grew exponentially. Peaking during 1903-1904, an epidemic occurred, and all the animals had been exterminated by 1907.



This was a considerable blow to Akameism... but even more terrible were the consequences for the species of predators, which had grown in numbers alongside the rabbits.

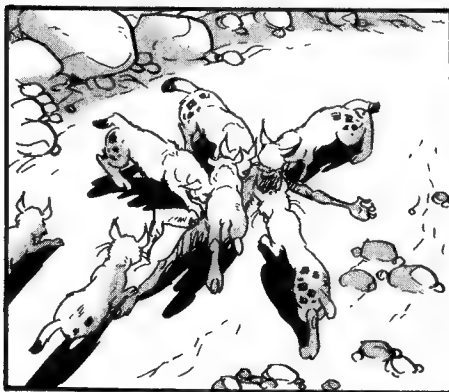
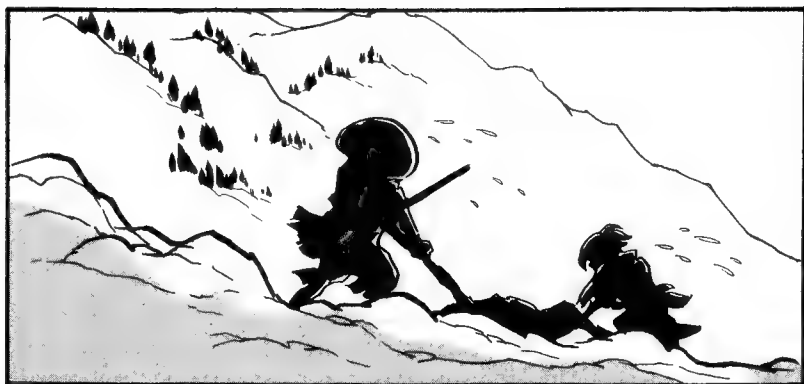


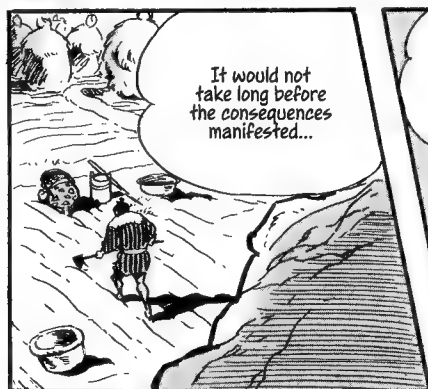


In particular the lynxes who always stalked rabbits, knew everything about their favoured prey, and shared a common appetite, had grown in numbers alongside them. Now, without a single rabbit to hunt, they could only die of starvation in the woods...



But the problem is the process by which these predators starve to death.







The farmers that went outside to work in the fields were the first to be attacked.



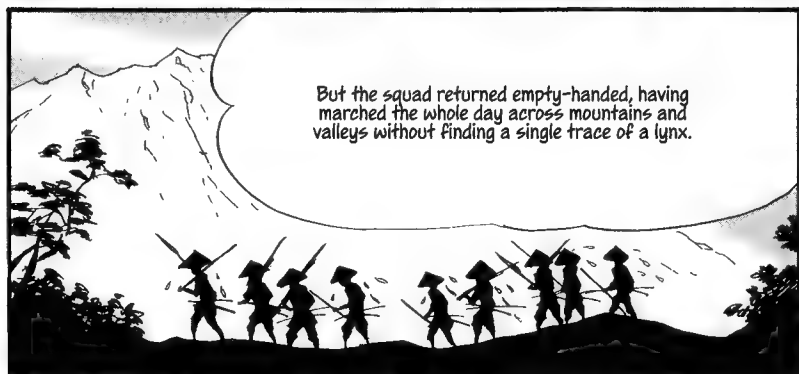
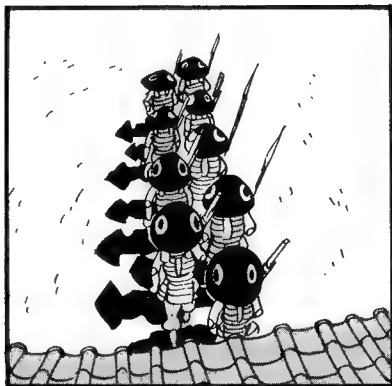
Since many had died from the famine that year, the lynxes had often had the chance to taste human flesh.

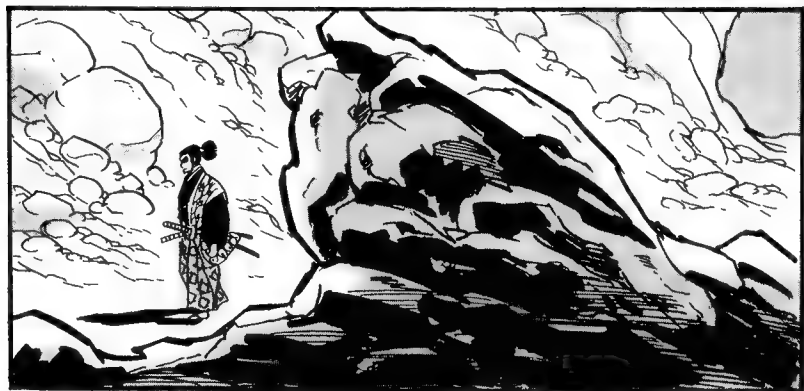
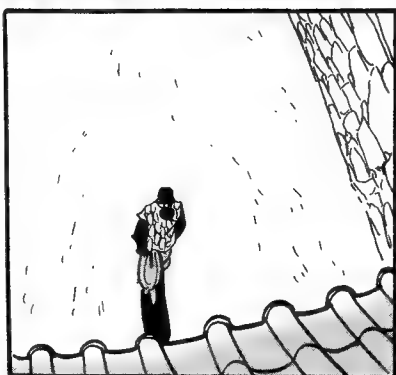


It was not long until the Princess of the Feudal Lord was attacked while enjoying the colours of autumn on the mountainside.



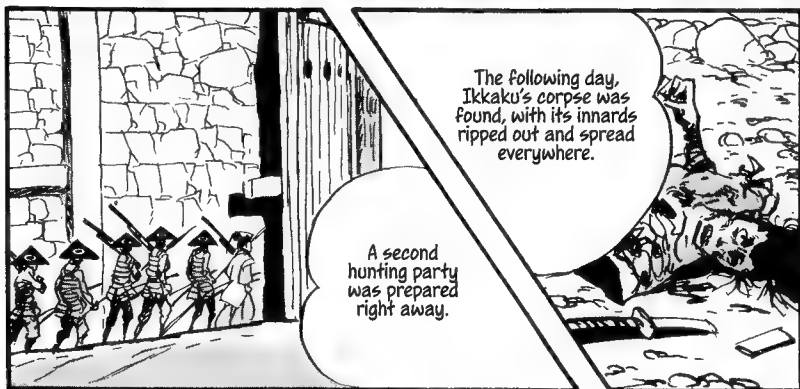
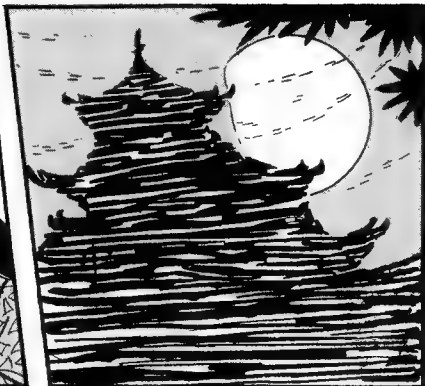
Fortunately she survived the attack, but knowing that she was attacked by a ferocious beast was a considerable shock.

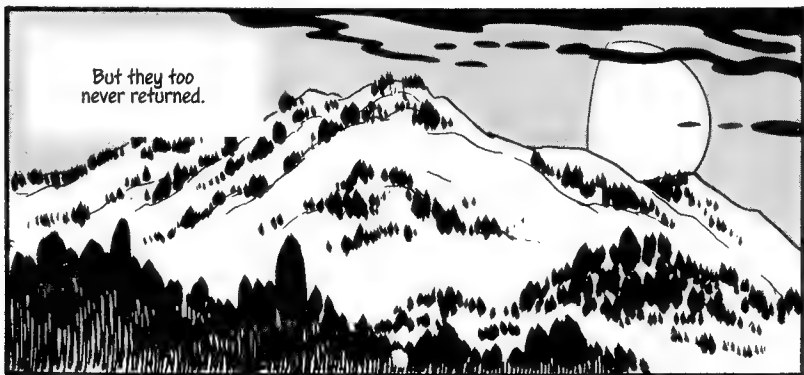
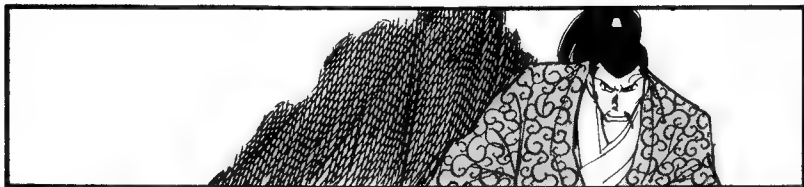








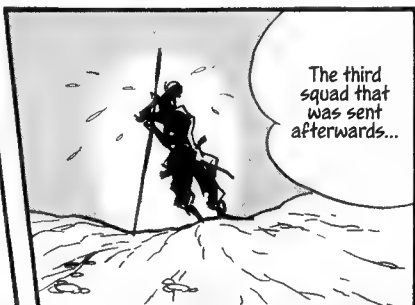




But they too
never returned.



UGH...
UGH...



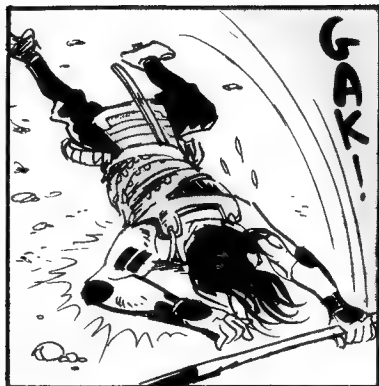
The third
squad that
was sent
afterwards...



...BY
A PACK
OF ONE
HUNDRED
LYNXES...

Y...YES,
WE WERE
AMBUSHED...

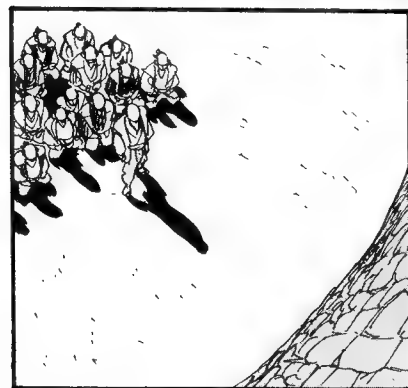
WHAT? ALL
KILLED?!



**Another hunting
squad intervened!**

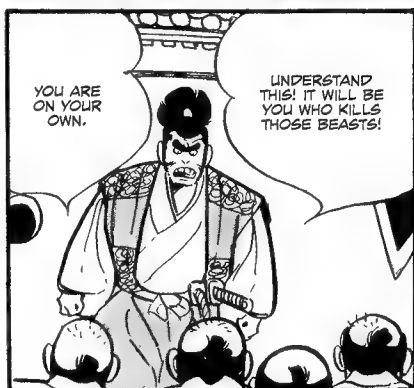
In truth, the warriors, along with Ikkaku himself, were anything but weak, but had no idea of what was going on around them. The increase in the lynx population was so great as to be unfathomable to them. Furthermore, these were animals not accustomed to hunting in groups. The very fact that they had formed into packs showed how starving they must have been.



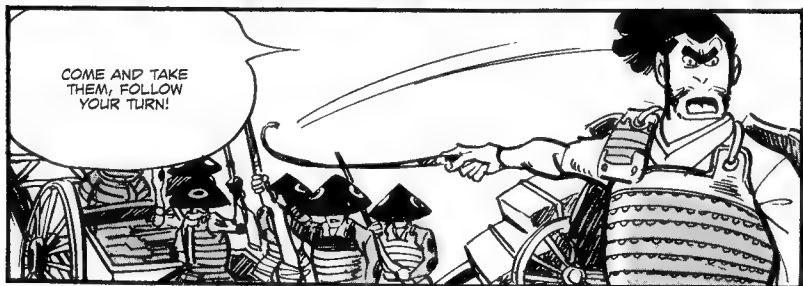
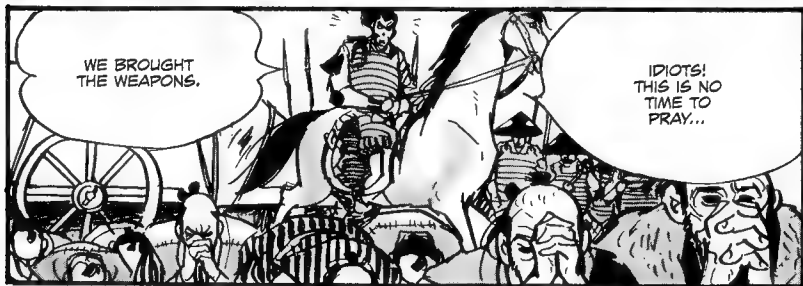
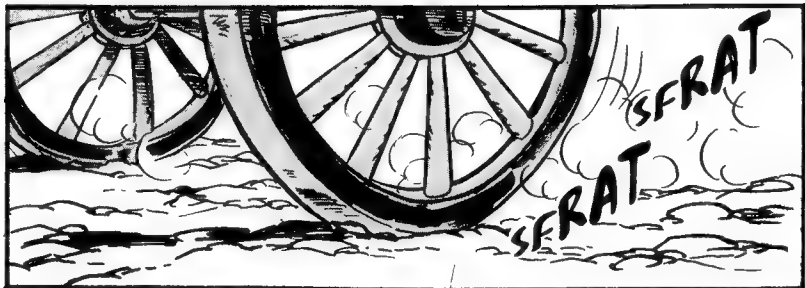


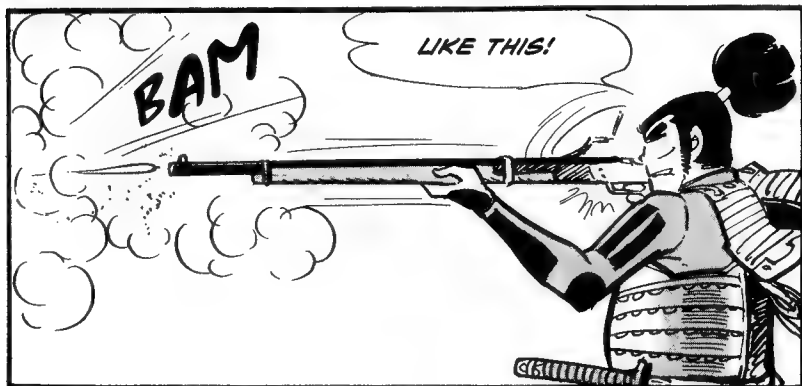
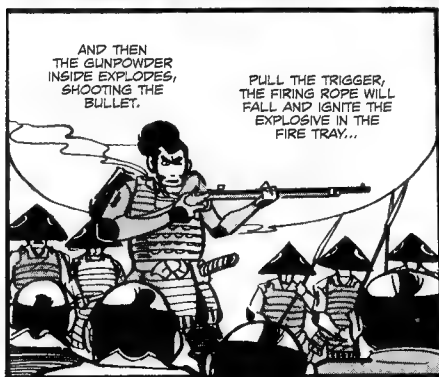


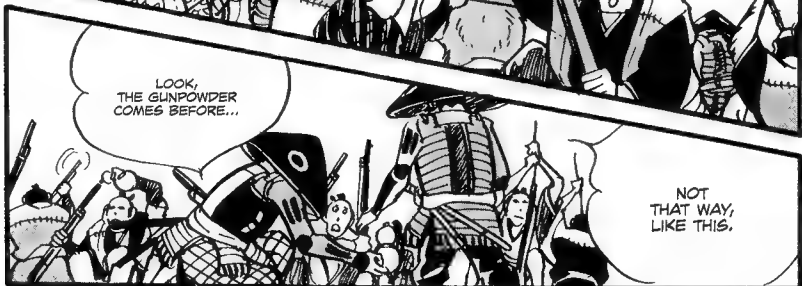
In reality, there were many losses among the farmers, with a dozen cases of entire families killed by the beasts.

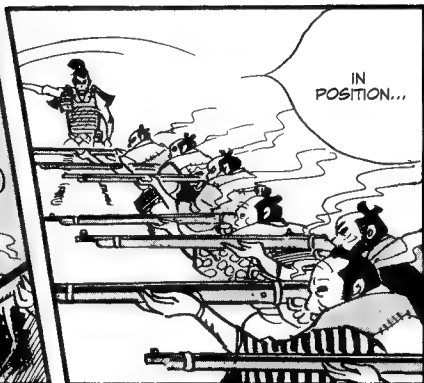
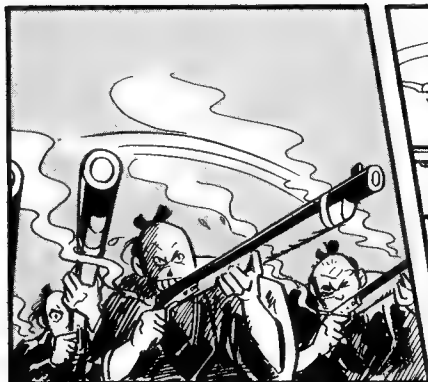












IN
POSITION...

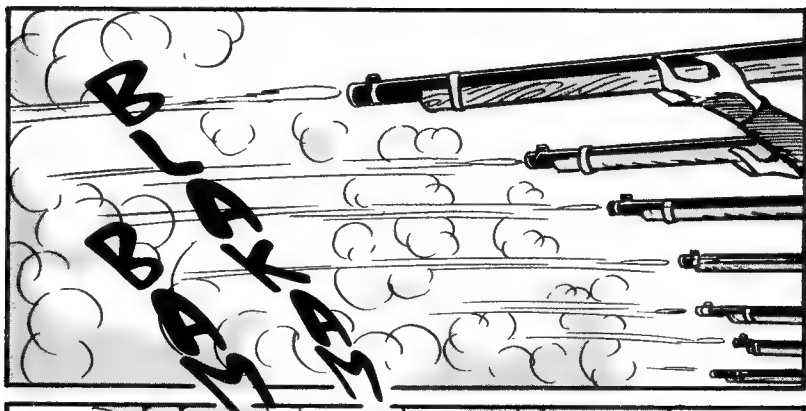


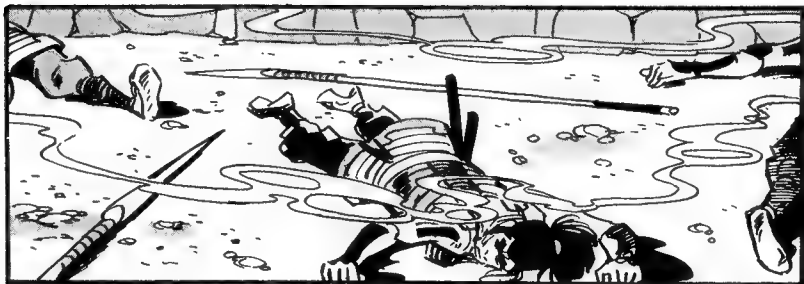
IDIOTS,
NOT THIS WAY...
AIM THERE!



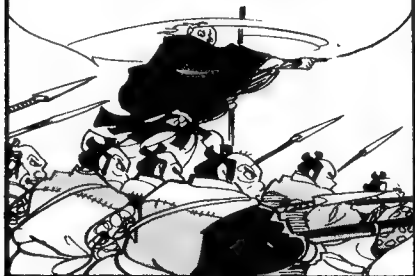
IT'S
DANGEROUS,
S...STOP IT!

HEY! WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?!





LET'S ADVANCE AND CONQUER
THE CASTLE! THE VENERABLE
AKAME ARE WITH US!

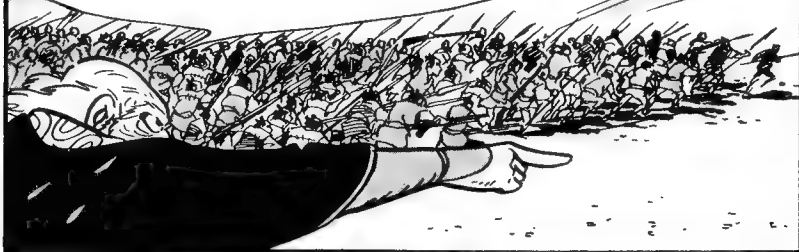


WE'VE GOT
RIFLES AND SPEARS,
AND THE LORD IS BUSY
WITH OTHER AFFAIRS...



IT'S TIME TO FIGHT!
THE VENERABLE AKAME WILL
HELP US! AND EVEN IF WE DIE
FIGHTING, AT LEAST WE'LL
HAVE A PEACEFUL DEATH!

WAAH!



THOSE WHO
FALL BACK WILL
BURN IN HELL.

WE'LL UNLEASH
THE HATE WE'VE FELT
FOR GENERATIONS. IT'S
FINALLY TIME TO FIGHT!

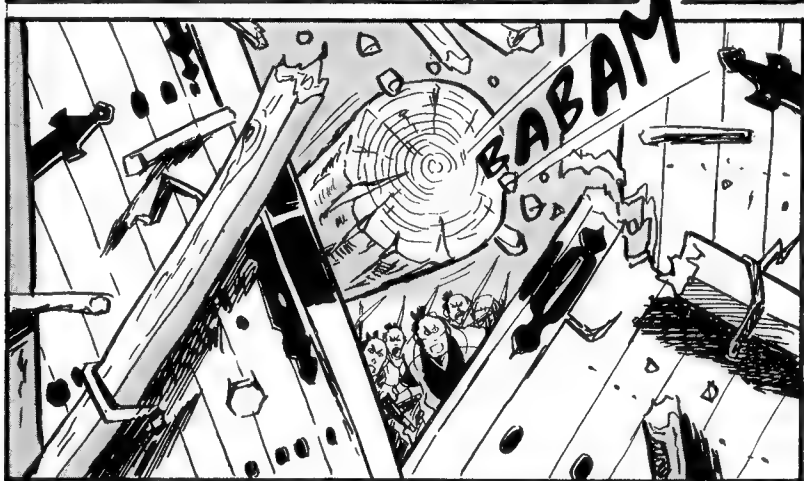
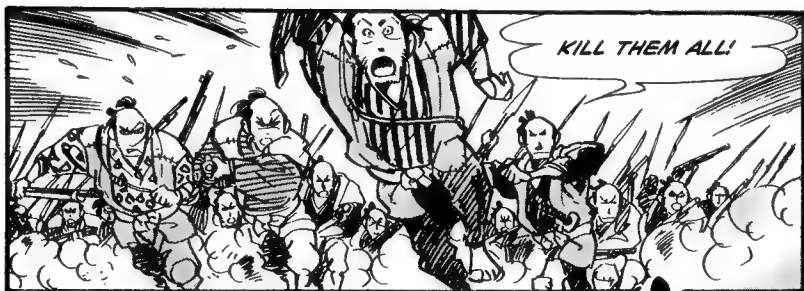


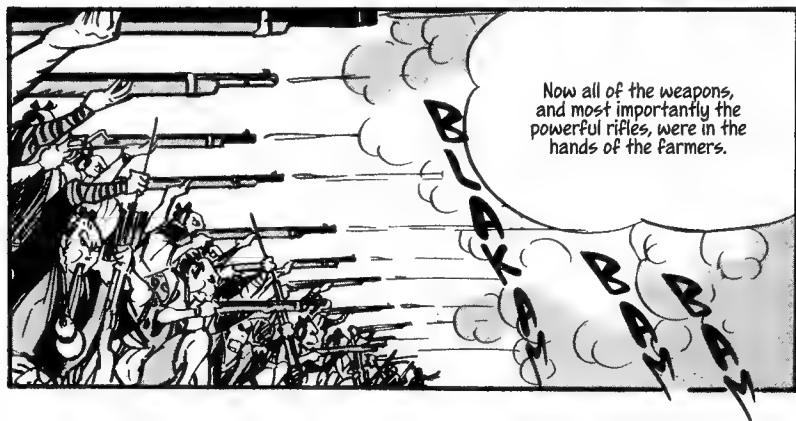
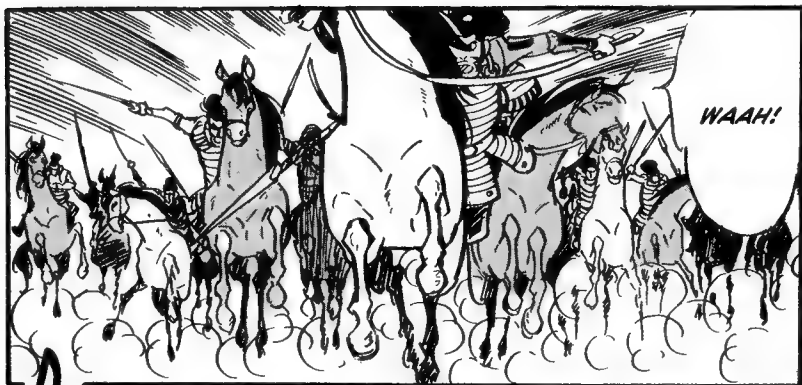
At first... the farmers were clueless, hence why the samurai fell for it. Yet as they clasped their rifles, their heritage, forged over centuries, surged unbidden to the surface, And in that moment, each of those triggers was pressed at once.



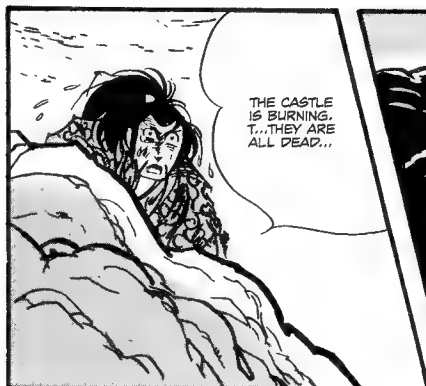
Heita's call to arms spread from village to village like a tsunami. More than a hundred thousand farmers from a hundred villages rose up in anger, with the thousands of rifles and spears meant for hunting the lynxes as their weapons...

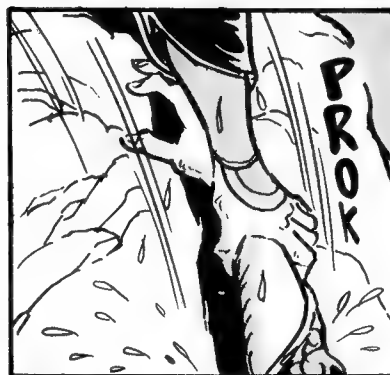
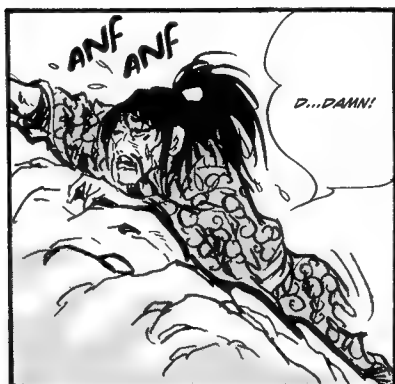
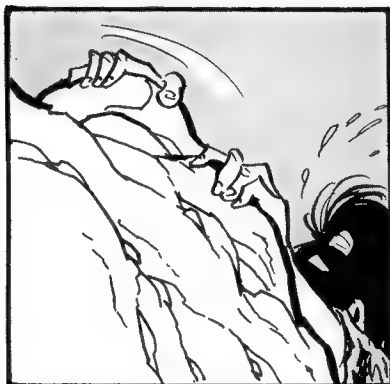


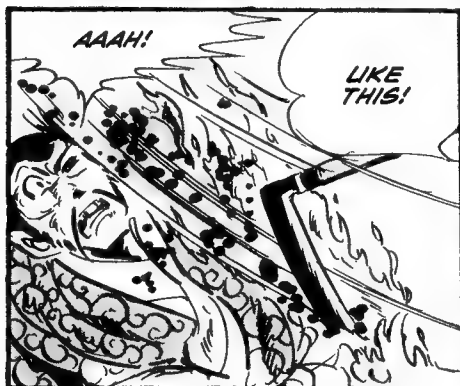
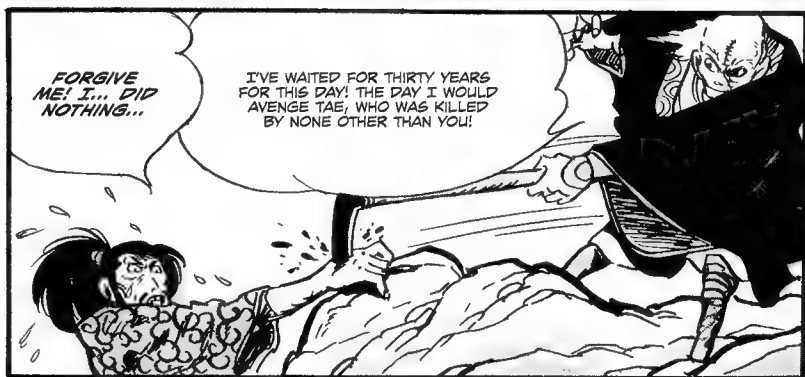


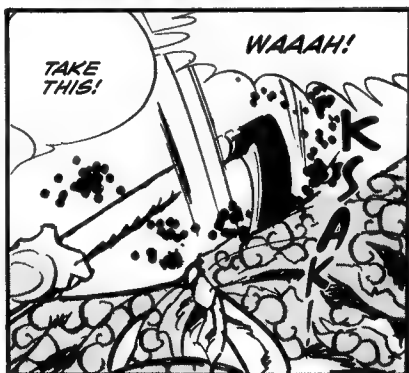
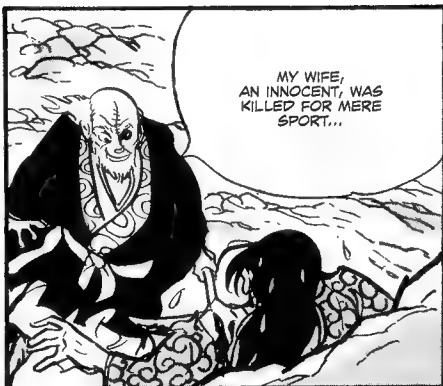




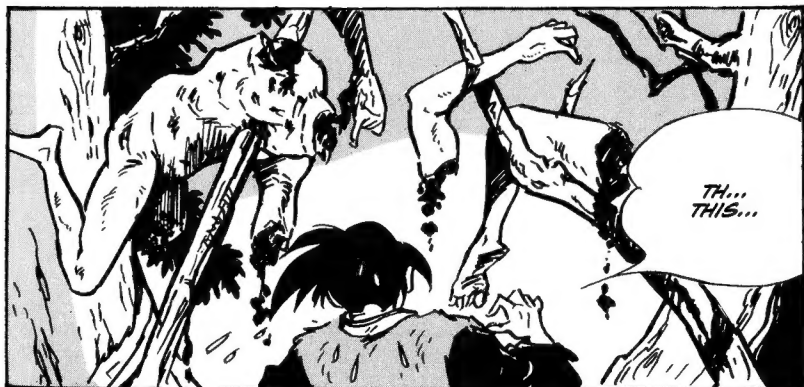


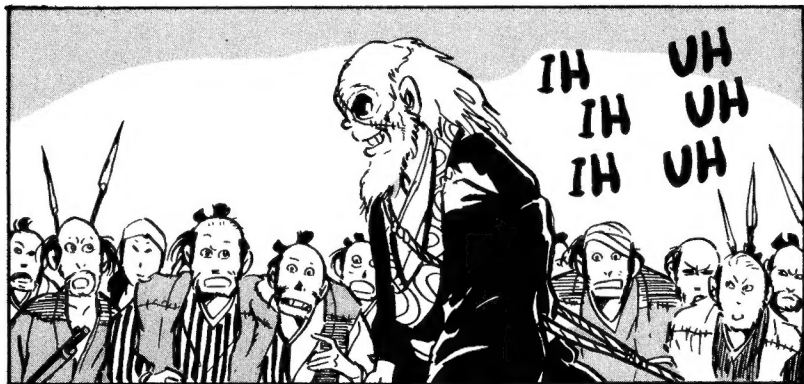
















Amidst the sad history of Japanese results, on occasion there is one that stands out among the others. For example, in the year 1669 (the ninth year of the Kanbun Era), thousands of farmers from the Tsuyama fiefdom, unable to pay the onerous taxes, fled on the excuse of a pilgrimage to the sanctuaries of Ise. In the year 1754 (the fourth year of the Horeki Era), more than two hundred thousand inhabitants from two hundred villages of the Arima territory, well organised with a well-prepared plan, obtained eighteen rifles and sixty thousand spears from the fiefdom under the pretense of a wild boar hunt, obtaining in this way a spoil of 170000 koku in military provisions. It's unnecessary to point out that the Buddhist Monk from this story is actually the farmer Matsuzo, whose wife Tae was murdered by Lord Nobuhira. Having obtained his revenge, thanks to an ingenious use of the natural laws and his religion Akameism, this weak-legged man with neither strength nor riches represents another example of these curious revolts...